EDITED BY

MARCO
GIUGNI

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GRASSO

The Oxford Handbook *of* POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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Political Science, University of Antwerp

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POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Edited by

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and

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To Chuck Tilly and Sidney Verba, who set the agenda for the study of political participation

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CHAPTER 1

THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ACROSS RESEARCH TRADITIONS

MARCO GIUGNI AND MARIA GRASSO

THE political participation of citizens is understood to be fundamental for democratic practice. The study of political participation reflects a main concern of political sociologists and political scientists since at least the behavioral revolution of the 1950s and 60s. Since then, the field has grown enormously. From an early focus on electoral politics and a view of participation as varying along a single dimension, the field has expanded to involve various types of activities, including non-electoral ones as well as the study of institutional and cultural contexts. This has been reflected in the increasing theoretical and methodological sophistication that has come to characterize the field of political participation studies. Theories and explanations of political participation have embraced a variety of paradigms across different disciplines, stressing a multiplicity of explanatory factors. Moreover, the methodological approaches to studying political participation have been thoroughly developed following major technical developments in research methods and computational capabilities.

The Oxford Handbook of Political Participation provides readers with up-to-date knowledge on the wide-ranging topics covered in this field, while taking into account the theoretical and methodological pluralism in the area as well as the most recent developments. The literature on political participation has traditionally followed two distinct paths, each related to a specific research field: one in politics, in the political science and political sociology traditions, and the other in sociology, with social movement studies. These two scholarly communities have often talked past each other. One of the aims of this Handbook is to bring together these two research traditions from political science and sociology, bridging research in political sociology and social movement studies, thus further developing the links between the disciplines that have only recently begun to emerge. Accordingly, the Handbook mainly brings together authors coming from both the politics and sociology research traditions, as well as key authors working on political participation coming also from other fields such as psychology, economics, anthropology, and geography.

One of the key features of the present volume, therefore, is that it deals with a longstanding and major field of studies in political science and political sociology, namely, political participation, and that it does so in a comprehensive and plural manner, both theoretically and methodologically. By doing so, it aims at cross-fertilization in the study of political participation, hoping that this will open new perspectives and research avenues. It aims to provide critical reviews and appraisals of the current state of the art and the areas most in need of future development, both with respect to conceptual and theoretical approaches as well as empirical knowledge and understandings of political participation. It also importantly aims to encourage dialogue across the disciplinary boundaries between the political sociology research tradition and social movement studies, and to engage with and reflect upon the causes and consequences of citizen participation in politics and various major current processes at play. This aim permeates the entire volume but can be seen in particular in the four chapters explicitly devoted to "bridging" perspectives and research traditions, both theoretical and methodological: a chapter on bridging rationalist, structuralist, and culturalist theoretical approaches; one on bridging qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches; one on bridging electoral and nonelectoral participation; and one on bridging cognitive and affective explanations.

We also feel that one of the major contributions of this Handbook comes through the clear and vivid way in which the chapters show why political participation matters and why it is at the core of democratic practice and such an important topic of study across multiple research fields. That is since it is so finely intermeshed with the very meaning and lifeblood of democracy itself—or, in any case, of any democracy worthy of that name—since it is what allows the people to have a say in the running of public affairs and, therefore, a chance to decide on their own destinies, shaping the conditions of their own existence into the future.

In the introductory chapter to *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*, Robert Goodin states that "[t]he best any handbook can do is to offer a bird's-eye overview of the general shape of its subjects, combined with some posthole exercises to show what riches might be found by probing deeper. This is the spirit in which this volume is offered. It is a schematic guide, and a sampler" (Goodin 2009: 3). He also stresses how editors of long Handbooks such as those in the style of the Oxford Handbooks must inevitably be selective in their choice of topics and treatments. Of course, this all applies also to the present Handbook. That said, the generous space allowed permitted us to be comprehensive in our aim to address the key aspects relating to the subject matter.

To allow for what we felt was the most logical structuring, the Handbook unfolds in nine main parts, each devoted to a different aspect of the study of political participation. Part I situates the study of political participation broadly within different disciplines, from political science and sociology to psychology, economics, anthropology, and geography. Part II focuses then on more specific key theoretical perspectives, from rational choice theory to political and social psychology, relational theory, and Marxism. Part III deals with various methodological approaches to the study of political participation, both quantitative and qualitative, including survey methods and experimental designs, the analysis of "big data," visual analysis, life history interviews, ethnographic methods, and participatory action research. Part IV discusses some of the main forms and modes of participation: electoral and partisan participation, civic engagement, protest participation, political consumerism and lifestyle activism, and online participation. Part V examines the social, institutional, cultural, and economic context of political participation. Part VI looks at a number of fundamental determinants of political participation, from age and generation to gender, social class and education, race and ethnicity, personality and motives, political values, identity, and emotions. Part VII focuses on several key processes underlying political participation: political socialization, political mobilization and recruitment, intersectionality, disengagement, and abstention. Part VIII examines certain outcomes of participation, both at the micro and macro level as well as the effectiveness of different forms of participation. Finally, Part IX includes chapters that discuss current trends and future directions for research on political participation in a more prospective way.

To our knowledge, no other volume is entirely devoted to the study of political participation, following such a comprehensive and plural view. As such, it is our hope that the present volume will complement other important Handbooks which deal in part with political participation but do not make it their core focus. To remain within the Oxford Handbooks family, we can mention *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior* (Dalton and Klingemann 2007), which includes a full part on political participation but within a broader discussion of issues and topics relating to political behavior. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Boix and Stokes 2009) also includes a few chapters on political participation and related topics but obviously has a much broader focus, whereas the recently published *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements* (della Porta and Diani 2015) is entirely devoted to social movement research and *The Oxford Handbook of Political Consumerism* (Boström et al. 2019) focuses on a specific way of being politically engaged. The present Handbook also deals in part with the social movement research tradition, but only as one perspective amongst others. Moreover, this Handbook has a greater, though not exclusive, focus on the micro level.

In brief, then, the present volume provides the first comprehensive, up-to-date treatment of political participation in all of its varied expressions; it covers a wide range of topics relating to the study of political participation, both from a theoretical and methodological perspective; it brings together the political science and political sociology tradition, on the one hand, and the social movement sociological tradition, on the other; it is sensitive to theoretical and methodological pluralism as well as the most recent developments in the field; and includes discussions combining perspectives that have traditionally been treated separately in the literature as well as discussions of current trends and future directions for research in this field. All these features, we believe, make it an incredibly useful resource for all those who are interested in understanding political participation, what it is, how it is approached in different disciplines and subdisciplines, how it is studied, the forms it takes, how it is facilitated or constrained by the broader context, as well as its determinants, processes, and outcomes.

Delimiting the Boundaries

Before we address in broad strokes the content of the Handbook following the canvas provided by the nine parts of the volume outlined earlier, we need to first discuss definitions allowing for delimiting our topic: What do we mean by political participation? This issue has often been the object of attention by scholars, without yet allowing them to reach a consensus about what political participation is. Definitions range from broader to more specific ones. An influential one has been proposed by Brady (1999: 737), who has defined political participation as "action by ordinary citizens directed towards influencing some political outcomes." This is obviously a very broad definition, though one that has the merit of pointing out the three key aspects of political participation: it is an "action"—not simply a belief or attitude—and it is done by "ordinary citizens," with the explicit aim of "influencing political outcomes," on some level. Another important feature is that participation should not be coerced nor paid but be conducted on a voluntary basis.

Perhaps the most comprehensive and systematic effort to date in this regard has been made by van Deth (2014), who has proposed an operational definition of political participation distinguishing between a minimalist, a targeted, and a motivational variant depending on a number of decision rules about how to define political participation (plus a fourth variant for non-political activities used for political purposes). The seven decision rules are the following: Do we deal with behavior? Is the activity voluntary? Is the activity done by citizens? Is the activity located in the sphere of government/state/politics? Is the activity targeted at the sphere of government/state/politics? Is the activity aimed at solving collective or community problems? Is the activity used to express political aims and intentions of participants? A positive answer to the first four decision rules leads to a minimalist definition, while targeted definitions imply that the activity is located in the sphere of government/state/politics or aimed at solving collective or community problems, and motivational definitions imply that the activity is used to express political aims and intentions of participants, that is, it is politically motivated. In a more recent development following the same approach, Theocharis and van Deth (2017) have slightly modified this taxonomy, most notably by including an additional question rule—whether the activity is made in a political context—resulting in five distinct definitions of political participation: a minimalist definition, two targeted definitions, and two circumstantial definitions—but overall logics remain the same. This is a helpful approach in our view.

The important point here is that there is no single definition of political participation, but that the definition depends very much on what we consider important as being part and parcel of what we call participation as well as the focus we wish to give to some aspects rather than others. While mostly agreeing on a minimal definition of what politics—and, therefore, also what political participation—is, scholars often diverge as to the precise boundaries of the concept and do not always agree on how far it can be stretched. This occurs within a single discipline, but most often cuts across disciplinary boundaries. In other words, the way political scientists define political participation might differ—at least to some extent—between political scientists, sociologists, economists, psychologists, anthropologists, and so forth.

Finally, we should also be aware of the fact that the very definition of political participation varies not only across disciplines, but also over time. Just as the repertoire of participation has undergone a large-scale historical process of transformation (Tilly 1986, 1995) and has continuously expanded, in particular starting from the mid-twentieth century (Theocharis and van Deth 2017, 2018), scholarly concepts and definitions of participation have changed, too. In particular, initial definitions emphasizing—and often limited to—the more institutionalized kinds of behaviors—have progressively left space to broader views encompassing extra-institutional forms as well as, more recently, participation that takes place in one's everyday life, reflecting a shift from "dutiful citizens" mostly acting through voting to "engaged citizens" more directly involved in politics (Dalton 2009), or even "self-actualized citizens" stressing quality of personal life as well as social relations in political activities (Bennett 2008). All this, of course, does not mean that we are walking on shaky ground, but simply that, when describing and explaining patterns of political participation, we should keep in mind that the subject matter may be broader or narrower depending on what is being included in the repertoire or not.

Political Participation across Disciplines and Core Theoretical Perspectives

Taken as a whole, Parts I and II of this Handbook provide an overview of the ways in which political participation is approached from different disciplinary and sub-disciplinary angles. Such disciplinary views and theoretical perspectives will inform much of the discussion in the remaining chapters of the Handbook. Earlier we made a broad distinction between two research traditions in the study of political participation—one mostly associated with political science and political sociology, the other drawing on social movement theory—stressing that one of the aims of the Handbook is to bring them together and move beyond a somewhat dichotomous view. However, as we also made clear, this topic is addressed, if to a lesser degree perhaps, also by other disciplines and from a variety of theoretical perspectives.

Without claiming exhaustivity, the chapters included in Part I examine how political participation is approached by six disciplines. The first and most obvious one is political science. The civic voluntarism model, which stresses the key role of resources—most notably, time, money, and especially civic skills—but also of psychological engagement with, as well as of recruitment into, politics (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995), is without doubt the most influential theory in this context. Chapter 2, by Kay Lehman Schlozman and Henry Brady, looks broadly at what political science has learned about political participation, both recently and in the past. This chapter builds on the civic voluntarism model they themselves, together with Sidney Verba, contributed to developing, additionally keying new findings to it.

Both sociology and psychology also have an important place in the study of political participation. Nonna Mayer discusses in Chapter 3 the specific contribution of sociology to the understanding of institutional and extra-institutional forms of political participation. This chapter shows how resources linked to social position, on the one hand, and social interactions and networks, on the other, shape the level and modes of political action. Similarly, Lauren Duncan focuses in Chapter 4 on what psychology as a field has brought to the understanding of three types of political participation (voting and other types of conventional political participation, volunteering, and collective protest behavior). While earlier accounts, especially in the social movement research tradition, stressed the direct effect of psychological factors—such as for example in the so-called breakdown or grievance theories of collective behavior (Buechler 2004; Useem 1998)—more recent efforts looking at both electoral and nonelectoral modes of action have examined their mediating or moderating role.

Although we should not make the error of underestimating their importance, other disciplines are perhaps less central to this field of study, or at least have placed a more limited focus on political participation. Take for example economics, whose impact in the field is discussed in Chapter 5 by Ruth Dassonneville, Fernando Feitosa, and Michael Lewis-Beck. Economic theories have most often been applied to the study of voter turnout and, more generally, in the economic literature, suggesting for example that citizens will punish incumbents in times of economic downturns for poor economic performance (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). Furthermore, as they point out, a large number of studies have used economic theories to explain political participation, but expectations are sometimes not met, with inconclusive results. In contrast, anthropology takes a broader view of political participation. As discussed by Julia Eckert in Chapter 6, anthropology has examined how diverse forms of political participation including many not usually identified with participation in a political system, come to shape political orders. From the vantage point of anthropology, political participation can be observed in all fields of existence, both public and private. Indeed, anthropologists consider how that very distinction is challenged and how diverse imaginations of political community are articulated in practices of political participation The contribution of geography to the study of political participation, finally, is discussed in Chapter 7 by Charles Pattie. The chapter explores the influence of geographical context on political participation, showing that spatial variations in the levels of participation cannot be reduced to simply to the geographical distribution of compositional influences on participation, but depends on important contextual influences.

The chapters included in Part II of the Handbook continue the discussion about different theoretical stances on political participation but do so less according to a disciplinary angle and more in terms of core theoretical perspectives which sometimes combine approaches from different disciplines. Once again without claiming exhaustivity, here are represented five key core theoretical perspectives that have informed a great deal of wide-ranging research on political participation. Rational choice theory is one of them. This theoretical approach has been applied mostly in political science and most often to explain voter turnout. Chapter 8, by Paul Whiteley, evaluates the use of rational choice theory to explain political participation in light of recent research into human decision-making in psychology and neuroscience. It shows that the rational choice model which is based on an axiomatic approach to theory-building fails to explain why individuals participate in politics, but also that rational choice accounts of participation provide an important normative explanation of the problems facing citizens when they are deciding to participate.

The next two chapters discuss two psychological-based theoretical perspectives which have played a major role in the literature on political participation. Chapter 9, by Emma Renström and Hanna Bäck, examines works in political psychology, stressing some of the key aspects that are usually put forward in this perspective, such as social identity and social influence, personality, and emotions. Chapter 10, by Bert Klandermans and Jacquelien van Stekelenburg, presents a social–psychological account of political participation. This framework connects the micro, meso, and macro level and separates demand, supply, and mobilization as factors influencing the dynamics of protest participation.

Political psychologists and social psychologists often stress the very same factors and mechanisms. However, while, in disciplinary terms, the former is closer to political science, the latter are more linked to sociology and often come from the tradition of social movement research. The remaining two approaches are further quite distinct in how they deal with political participation. Mario Diani discusses in Chapter 11 relational approaches, illustrating some key relational mechanisms which play different roles in accounts of political processes. We should stress that relational explanations are quite popular in social movement studies—where social networks and recruitment processes are at the core of one of the main accounts of protest participation—but much less so in political science, although the civic voluntarism model also emphasizes the role of recruitment in the form of requests for activity and political mobilization efforts, and where increasingly studies have looked at the role of context for political participation. Laurence Cox and Alf Gunvald Nilsen examine in Chapter 12 Marxist accounts of political participation, arguing that Marxism is fundamentally historical, so that rather than assuming a fixed and general institutional situation across states and periods, the Marxist contribution can best be expressed as empirical questions about popular participation in specific contexts.

The discussion of the core theoretical perspectives in this Part of the Handbook ends with the first of the four "bridging" chapters included in the volume, concluding each of the four respective parts. Marc Hooghe ventures in Chapter 13 into a discussion of how rationalist, structuralist, and culturalist accounts—which have been put forward in different ways by the various theoretical perspectives discussed in this Part of the Handbook and which have rarely engaged in a constructive dialogue—can be combined to improve our understanding of why and how ordinary citizens get involved in politics or abstain from doing so. This chapter argues that the meso-level—organizations, mobilization campaigns, and so forth—offers most opportunities to combine different theoretical perspectives in the study of political participation and points out that a comprehensive study of political participation requires at least some dialogue between different perspectives. The integrated model he proposes, combining individual, cultural, and structural elements should be helpful for researchers aiming to overcome some of the obstacles erected by a narrower view focusing on single theoretical perspectives.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

Just as, theoretically, political participation is dealt with from different disciplinary angles and according to various core theoretical perspectives, it can be studied through a variety of methodological approaches. These range from more standard quantitative survey methods or qualitative semi-structured interviews to newer approaches such as visual analysis or participatory action research. The social movement research tradition has been particularly creative in implementing novel and original methodologies, while works in political science and political sociology have tended to remain faithful to—often, but by no means exclusively, quantitative—standard methods such as the use of data analysis from population surveys or, more recently, applying experimental designs. Yet, taken as a whole, the field is characterized by a methodological pluralism that is beneficial to a broader and deeper understanding of the determinants, processes, and outcomes of political participation.

Part III of the Handbook covers a number of different methods of data collection and analysis which, to varying degrees, have been applied to the study of political participation. The chapters included in this part describe the various methods, how they were and can be applied in this field of studies, as well as their advantages and limitations, aiming, whenever possible, to discuss potential for new avenues of research concerning the method at hand.

The quantitative analysis of data from population surveys is undoubtedly a key method that researchers have used to analyze political participation and its determinants. This type of approach is particularly helpful to look for the covariates of different forms and modes of participation while keeping other factors constant. Furthermore, it allows for empirical generalization that other, more qualitative methods cannot offer, as they are most often based on random samples of the general population or of a specific population under study and make use of standardized instruments of data collection. As Eva Anduiza and Raül Tormos discuss in Chapter 14, however, surveys are not without their own challenges, most notably those posed by the changing reality and hence conceptualization of political participation, the need to avoid socially desirable responses and memory failures of respondents, the difficulties of comparing repertoires across contexts, and the intricacies of identifying causal relations.

While representing a powerful methodological tool, surveys can be limited when it comes to establishing causal relationships. In other words, they may face, depending on the theoretical specification of the problem at hand, the issue of possible reverse causality or of endogeneity. One way to address this can be through a panel survey design, that is, repeated measures of the same individuals over time. Additionally, to meet this challenge, researchers have developed experimental designs, which are discussed by Eline de Rooij and Jessica Burch in Chapter 15. As they show, there has been an increasing adoption of experiments in political science and sociology over the last three decades, including for the study political participation. Experiments can be very different in their design. Traditionally, a distinction is made between lab, field, and survey experiments. The chapter aims to move beyond this distinction in order to highlight studies with creative designs in terms of their setting, subject pool, intervention type, and outcome measurement.

On the qualitative side, Arnab Chakraborty and Paul Lichterman deal with ethnographic approaches in Chapter 16, arguing that ethnographic research allows for uncovering the meanings and practices that constitute different kinds of political participation, to clarify relations between political ideas and political actors in different settings. Moreover, it serves to illuminate the ambiguous and shifting boundaries between what is and is not political or politicized. Another qualitative method often applied to the study of political participation is life history interviews. Lorenzo Bosi discusses these in Chapter 17, looking specifically at how the stories that are told relate to what has happened in the respondent's life trajectory and, specifically activists' dynamic trajectories. Again, this methodology has often been used to investigate participation in social movement activities, although one may also apply it to other types of activism as well.

Moving on to more recent developments in the study of political participation with respect to novel methodologies, Elena Pavan discusses in Chapter 18 the use of so-called Big Data—that is, data resources which are generally generated for other purposes than the study of participation and tend to be characterized by higher than ever volume, velocity, and variety. This chapter shows where Big Data may have potential to take political participation studies further if their inclusion within research courses is piloted by a research orientation that is, at the same time, aware of data specificities, proactively ready to integrate theory-driven knowledge production modes, and methodologically creative. Introducing another of the more novel approaches, Chapter 19, by Noa Milman and Nicole Doerr, engages with visual analysis, including physical, representational, and public visibility elements of political participation. This chapter illustrates how visual analysis offers researchers in social movements and political participation a unique and rich angle for analysis. Participatory action research—the final method discussed in this part of the Handbook—is also a relatively new qualitative research methodology, although it has a different and quite specific purpose. This approach is discussed by Marcelle Dawson in Chapter 20, which emphasizes everyday politics as a legitimate site for the development of contemporary political subjectivities and suggests that participatory action research is, itself, a form of political participation in that it has the potential to bring about durable social change by amplifying the agency of research participants. Finally, Chapter 21, by Ana Isabel Nunes and Matt Henn, looks at bridging qualitative and quantitative approaches. Considering that the quantitative versus qualitative divide in the study of political participation is neither inevitable nor to be preferred, they consider the potential value to be gained by adopting mixed methods approaches when studying how people choose to engage in politics.

Modes of Participation

The question of what should count as political participation cannot be separated from the question of which forms it takes. Scholarship has often stressed that that are different ways in which ordinary people may get involved in politics. Distinguishing between different forms and modes of participation is a key step for understanding why and how people get involved in politics. At the most general and abstract level, a distinction is often made between conventional and unconventional forms. The first includes voting as well as related forms linked to political parties such as contacting public officials for political purposes or participating in political campaigns, while the latter most often refers to participation in protest activities such attending a street demonstration or carrying out more risky activities such as taking part in a strike, sit-ins, blockades, occupations, and the like.

The conventional versus unconventional divide, however, can be seen as a moving target. Indeed, certain forms of mobilization that could be considered as unconventional in earlier times have become quite conventional today, if by this one means the proportion of people that engage in them. The mass demonstration is perhaps the most telling example. While initially undoubtedly an unconventional—and disruptive—means of action in the hands of those with fewer opportunities to make their voice heard (Lipsky 1968), it has become a more ritualized and mainstream way for ordinary citizens to make themselves heard and has become "normalized" in the sense that the profile of demonstrators comes to increasingly reflect that of the broader national population (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001), resulting in its increasing "conventionalization." Today's mass demonstrations are used by a broader range of groups on a large set of issues, and for different purposes. They have, in other words, become part of what has been called a "social movement society" (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). Additionally, it is unclear whether certain specific forms should be considered conventional or rather unconventional, and researchers often disagree on this point. Take for example the petition. Is it conventional or unconventional? On the one hand, it has been traditionally included amongst the items on protest activism—along with demonstrations, boycotting, and buycotting—in historical studies such as the World Values Survey. On the other, it is generally one of the most common forms of participation after voting (Grasso 2016; Theorcharis and van Deth 2017). Perhaps it stands somewhere in between. Indeed, a confirmatory factor analysis of the range of political activities usually adopted by citizens, concluded that petitions belong to the political consumerism mode of participation (Teorell et al. 2007); others end up including them in the protest repertoire (Theocharis and van Deth 2017). Perhaps political consumerism, including petitioning as well as boycotting and buycotting can be seen as a more "conventional" and importantly—individualized—mode of "unconventional" political action versus the more "purely unconventional" modes of high-risk protest activism.

All this suggests that, in spite of the common usage of the conventional versus unconventional distinction, this remains nebulous as it emerged historically, but what were traditionally unconventional acts challenging the status quo have become more and more mainstream in the current historical juncture, whereas what were more conventional acts such as party membership have undergone sharp declines over time. Perhaps a better, owing to the more precise terminology, though largely overlapping distinction, is the one between institutional and noninstitutional forms (Grasso 2016). The former refer to activities that take place within the traditional channels of institutional politics—in particular voting—whereas the latter occur outside of them, often including protest activities (that is, the same as what has historically been understood as the conventional versus unconventional divide). Since the main focus of research on institutionalized forms is on voting, although party membership and other political party activities, contacting politicians and campaign are a few prominent examples of this repertoire, scholars sometimes choose to distinguish between electoral from nonelectoral forms of participation.

Political participation, it is clear, can hardly be reduced to a simple binary dichotomy. It is by nature a varied and multifaceted phenomenon. Scholars have tried to make sense of such a varied repertoire of available means by grouping them into broader modes of participation according to their underlying logic. An early effort in this direction was made by Milbrath (1965), who distinguished between voters and patriots, contact specialists, communicators, party and campaign workers, community activists, and protestors. Similarly, in their seminal study on political action, Barnes and Kaase (1979) identified the political action repertoire as made by four different profiles of citizens based on different combinations of a conventional political participation scale and a protest potential scale: inactives, conformists, reformists, activists, and protesters. Dalton (2019) adapted the modes of activity identified earlier by Verba et al. (1978)—voting, campaign activity, communal activity, contacting officials on personal matters, and protest—to show how each mode is characterized by a specific combination of type of influence, scope of outcome, degree of conflict, initiative required, and need to cooperate with others.

All these efforts to classify the range of citizens' political activities largely converge on a limited number of significantly distinct modes of participation. Teorell et al. (2007) have used three main criteria—the activity's channel of expression (representational or extra-representational), its mechanism of influence (exit-based or voice-based), and its targeted versus non-targeted character—to isolate the following five modes of participation (from the most to the least institutionalized): voting, party activities, contacting, consumer participation, and protest activities. The authors further empirically tested this typology through a principal component analysis of nearly 20 different forms of participation and largely confirmed the typology. Following a similar approach, Theocharis and van Deth (2017) proposed a typology which includes—in addition to voting—digitally networked participation, institutionalized participation, protest, volunteering, and consumerist participation. In a separate effort, they replaced volunteering with civic participation (Theocharis and van Deth 2018), but the underlying logic of the typology remained the same. Among the various existing typologies, finally, it is also worth mentioning the one proposed by Ekman and Amnå (2012). These authors have proposed a comprehensive typology that distinguishes between non-participation, civil (latent) and manifest participation, as well as between individual and collective forms of participation.

Five of the six chapters that form Part IV of the Handbook are each devoted to discussing a specific mode of participation. The final chapter—one of the four "bridging" chapters included in the volume that conclude the respective parts—tries to move beyond the traditional electoral versus nonelectoral divide. Chapter 22, by Mark Franklin, focuses on the most institutionalized forms, linking electoral and partisan participation, hence suggesting that voter turnout and party choice should be treated as aspects of a single dynamic process. In Chapter 23, Joakim Ekman and Erik Amnå build on their earlier effort with respect to civic engagement, in particular to propose a thin notion of civic engagement that may be measured in a straightforward way in empirical studies. Chapter 24, by Marco Giugni and Maria Grasso, addresses a number of key issues relating to protest participation, such as what is protest participation, how it can be studied, who engages in it, how it can be explained, the extent to which it depends on context, and how it has transformed over time (Giugni and Grasso 2019b). Chapter 25, by Jasmine Lorenzini and Francesca Forno, deals with political consumerism and lifestyle politics, a mode of participation that has gained much importance in recent years, especially amongst the younger generations. They argue in particular that political consumerism and lifestyle activism are associated with unequal political participation and lack a procedural understanding of democracy that allows the inclusion of different segments of society in decision-making processes.

The chapters mentioned thus far all focus on primarily so-called "offline" political activities, the traditional way of engaging in politics until the advent of the internet and related channels. Today, however, online participation has an increasingly relevant role. These kinds of political activities are discussed by Jennifer Earl and Kate Kenski in Chapter 26. They make two important points with respect to online political participation in particular. The first is that research on contemporary political action needs to consider online aspects, even if focused on ostensibly offline action, because of the significant relationships and crossovers between offline and online action and the hybridized media context. The second is that researchers who have been studying online elements of political participation also need to be deeply embedded within the literatures on the form of political participation they are studying instead of assuming that all digital activity is new or different. Finally, as noted, Chapter 27, by Endre Borbath and Swen Hutter, examines political participation by citizens who bridge electoral and nonelectoral action forms, arguing for integrating our understanding of political participation across the electoral and the protest arena.

Contexts

Research on political participation has traditionally focused on the micro level of analysis, that is, on individual properties and characteristics—such as social background, political attitudes and values, predispositions, and the like—that may facilitate participation or erect obstacles to it. The role of the broader environment has long been overlooked. This holds especially for the political science and political sociology research tradition, whose interest in the context of participation is more recent, while students of social movements have paid more attention to it at least since the early 1980s. Yet, even in the other research tradition, the context was not completely overlooked. For example, the civic voluntarism model (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995) does pay attention to the social and institutional context, at least in the theoretical setting. Similarly, social capital theory (Stolle 2007) also examines how the context of social networks might impinge upon political participation. In both cases, however, the context is viewed from the vantage point of the individual participants, looking for example at their social embeddedness in previous networks and ties.

Attention to the context has also been sparse in electoral studies and research on voter turnout. To be sure, all key models of voting—such as those from the Columbia and Michigan schools as well as the Economic model—have included reference to the broader environment of voter behavior in their theoretical explanations. Yet, systematic analyses showing the importance of context-level factors have entered relatively late this field of studies (Franklin 1996, 2004). Since then, research on voter turnout has considered the role of institutional and contextual characteristics such as the effective number of parties, the closeness of the election, the mobilization by political organizations, and so forth, in addition to individual characteristics (Wass and Blais 2017).

While the micro level is the focus of the volume given its subject matter of individual political participation, the present Handbook also intends to give context the attention it deserves in the study of political participation. This is done specifically in Part V, but other chapters also touch upon the role of the context as well as the ways in which it interacts with individual-level factors to account for citizen involvement in politics.

At the most fundamental level, the role of context is captured by that of social and political cleavages. Cleavage theory can be traced back to the work of Rokkan (2009) as well as Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and has received much attention in recent years with respect to explanations for the rise of right-wing populist parties and movements in relation to processes of globalization (Kriesi et al. 2008). Generally speaking, as Martin Dolezal maintains in Chapter 28, scholars of political participation—corresponding to what we have called the political science and political sociology research tradition—have used the concept of cleavage with a focus mainly on specific modes of participation such as turnout and have mostly explored social cleavages. Interpreting political cleavages as a contextual factor has been applied above all to research on protest politics.

As noted, students of protest politics and social movements have paid a great deal of attention to the political and institutional context (McAdam and Tarrow 2019). This has been done in particular within so-called political process theory and, more specifically, through the concept of political opportunity structures (Kriesi 2004). This allows to look at how movement emergence, mobilization, and outcomes may be facilitated or constrained by the political opportunities made available in their broader institutional environment. The role of the institutional and political context, in particular in the study of contentious politics, but more generally for political participation, is discussed by Manlio Cinalli in Chapter 29.

Institutional aspects of the broader environment have been put at center stage by students of political participation, regardless of the research tradition from which they are drawn. However, other contextual aspects play an important role as well. Culture is certainly one of them. The role of culture—most often understood as value orientations and patterns—for political behavior has a long-standing tradition, tracing back at least to the seminal work by Almond and Verba (1963) through research on the work on cross-cultural value orientations and how they may affect politics (Inglehart 1997). Culture as context has been less central to studies of social movements, which have mainly focused on the institutional context and most often treated culture in a more endogenous way, for example by examining framing and interpretative processes by movement participants and organizations (Snow et al. 2019). As Franziska Deutsch argues in Chapter 30, while often overlooked, culture provides a fruitful approach to the study of political participation across contexts and should be included more systematically in comparative research.

Last but not least, the economic context should also be considered. The role of the economy is obviously central in theories of economic voting (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier

2000), while it has historically remained somewhat in the shadows in research on political participation more generally as well as in social movement studies. The importance of economic conditions, however, has resurfaced in recent years, particular in the aftermath of the deep economic crisis that has struck Europe from 2008 onward (Bermeo and Bartels 2014; Giugni and Grasso 2018, 2021; Giugni and Lorenzini 2020). As King and Carberry stress in Chapter 31, economic conditions can be both the object and the cause of political participation. The chapter further explores how changes in the economy—especially worsening economic conditions—shape both the propensity for individuals to mobilize around political issues as well as the forms of political participation that are adopted.

Determinants and Processes

The bulk of the literature on political participation is devoted to understanding the reasons why people participate—or do not participate—in politics, why they participate in some forms and not in others, what makes them more or less engaged, and related questions. Of course, political participation is a complex phenomenon that can hardly be explained by a single factor or even a handful of factors. However, research has pointed to a number of key individual-level determinants of political participation, that is, individual characteristics that are often associated with citizen engagement in politics. Their importance and explanatory power may vary from one specific mode of participation to the other, in particular across the institutional versus noninstitutional divide. Furthermore, as we already hinted at earlier, different disciplines and theoretical perspectives have paid particular attention to certain aspects. For example, research in political science and political sociology has traditionally focused on the role of people's sociodemographic characteristics as well as political attitudes and values. This can be seen, for example, in the so-called socioeconomic status (SES) model, with its focus on education, income, and occupation (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1978) but also in the civic voluntarism model with its stress on individual resources (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995), just to mention a couple of the most well-known models. Works in political psychology and social psychology, in contrast, have underlined such aspects as personality, motives, identity, and emotions. These are also aspects that have often been given attention in studies of social movements and protest participation, although the picture concerning this research tradition is much more varied in this regard.

Part VI of the Handbook reviews and discusses seven key determinants of political participation. The limited space allowed for in this introductory chapter prevents us from discussing in detail each of them. Therefore, we restrict ourselves to referring to the specific chapters in which they are dealt with. Chapter 32, by Laura Serra and Kaat Smets, examines the role played by age and generation in explaining political participation. As they point out, age is thought to affect not only whether someone participates in politics, but also the ways in which they participate and factors that influence these decisions. Chapter 33, by Camila Páez-Bernal and Miki Kittilson, addresses gender issues in the study of political participation. Scholars have paid much attention to gender differences, especially in electoral participation (Beauregard 2014; Dassonneville and Kostelka 2020; Inglehart and Norris 2003). As the chapter makes clear, however, examining only electoral forms of participation limits explanations of how, when, and why men and women participate in the political process. The chapter moves beyond such a specific focus on the gender gap in voting behavior to discuss how communitarian and private spaces can be grounds for political participation. Chapter 34, by Geoffrey Evans and Matthew Hepplewhite, considers the role of class and education. As we said, these aspects form a main line of investigation in research on political participation, whether electoral or nonelectoral. Indeed, both class (Knutsen 2007) and education (Berinsky and Lenz 2011) have been repeatedly shown to be powerful determinants of involvement in different forms and modes of participation. The chapter focuses on voting and stresses the need to look at both at the demand side and supply side when it comes to explaining the effect of class and education on voting behavior. Chapter 35, by Marisa Abrajano, Jan Leighley, and Agustin Markarian, looks at another specific dividing line, namely race and ethnicity. It argues that political participation of marginalized groups reflects the costs and benefits imposed by the broader political and historical contexts in addition to the typical individual-level factors considered in standard participation models. It also suggests that generalizing our understanding of race, ethnicity, and participation across different political systems and social contexts requires a nuanced understanding of country-specific histories, and efforts to draw broad, systematic comparative conclusions regarding race and ethnicity as determinants of participation can be highly problematic.

While the four chapters mentioned so far deal with sociodemographic characteristics, the following three are mostly concerned with social and political predispositions that can help to explain individual differences in political participation. Chapter 36, by Kathrin Ackermann, discusses the role of personality—for example in relation to the well-known "Big Five" personality traits (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) and motives—in particular, political interest, political knowledge, political efficacy, and partisanship. It shows that openness to experience and extraversion are the most important correlates of political participation, and that the link between psychological factors, like personality traits and motives, and political participation is likely to be context dependent. Chapter 37, by Anthony Heath, Lindsay Richards, and Julia Jungblut, explores the relationship between political values, on the one hand, and electoral and non-electoral participation, on the other. It focuses more specifically on some key value orientations, namely left/right, libertarian/authoritarian, traditional, postmaterialist, and democratic values, showing that democratic values prove to have strong associations with both forms of participation, while postmaterialist values have a particularly strong association with non-electoral participation, and the level and strength of the relationships differs between democracies and autocracies, showing that the political context also matters. While these kinds of individual predispositions are the focus in the political science and political sociology research tradition, Chapter 38, by James Jasper and Anna Zhelnina, look instead at those aspects that have most often been put at center stage by students of social movements, examining the interplay of collective identities and emotions in a variety of processes involving participation, such as avoiding it, engaging others, continuing and making strategic decisions, and disengaging from it. This chapter, in particular, points to the fact that collective identities are emotional as much as they are cognitive, and that a full range of emotions is at play in political action, both directed at groups and shaped by group identities, as individuals move in and out of political participation.

Explanations of political participation stressing the cognitive side of individual predispositions—that is, political attitudes such as political interest, trust, and efficacy—have often been contrasted to accounts emphasizing their affective side—most notably, identity and emotions, but to some extent also personality traits and motivations. Just as the one between structure and culture, this opposition, however, is at best largely artificial, if not misleading. This is perhaps best seen in the concept of values, which has both a cognitive and an affective dimension, or in collective identities, which are both emotional and cognitive.

In Chapter 39, the final chapter of this part of the volume, Alessandro Nai continues the "bridging" task started in previous chapters, endeavoring to build some conceptual and theoretical bridges between cognitive and affective explanations of political participation by investigating cognitive attitudes and emotions. Besides looking at the interplay of these two kinds of drivers of participation, the chapter discusses the importance of cognition and emotions to mediate the effects of political information.

While investigating the determinants leading ordinary citizens to get involved in politics forms a sizable—perhaps prevailing—part of the literature, political participation is, however, also a process which cannot be reduced to a set of explanatory factors and the extent to which they are associated with citizen participation. Therefore, in addition to assessing the determinants—and contextual conditions—of participation in a static way, one also needs to study the processes underlying it in a more dynamic fashion. In other words, we need to study not only why people get involved in politics, but also how they do so.

Part VII of the Handbook examines five such processes. Again, discussing them in detail is out of the scope of the present introduction but we do mention them, pointing to the specific chapters in which they are discussed. Chapter 40, by Anne Muxel deals with political socialization. The study of political socialization has a long-standing tradition in political sociology, and much of the literature on political participation has underlined the role of socialization for getting people involved in politics (Jennings 2007). This chapter focuses on socialization considered both as a background and as a process. It sheds light on recent research in the field related to a number of changes and mutations observed in our modern democracies, and invites a re-examination of some of the classical vectors and experiences of socialization with which individuals are confronted. Chapter 41, by Aengus Bridgman and Dietlind Stolle, examines mobilization, another fundamental process underlying political participation. It provides an assessment of the current state of research on how people are mobilized into—and sometimes demobilized from—political action, looking specifically at three key mobilization spheres, namely voluntary associations, informal social ties, and digital networks. Chapter 42, by Christine Slaughter and Nadia Brown, argues for the importance to the study of political participation of intersectionality which lessens the extent that differences are essentialized across groups, by examining the intersection of relevant identities. The chapter examines how gender, race, ethnicity, and class influence women of color's participation compared to male counterparts. It shows how political participation research must consider how multiple identities—not just in isolation—and proximity to institutional access and power among women shape their engagement in the political process.

As we said on several occasions, research on political participation has most often focused on why and how ordinary citizens get involved in politics. The opposite process—disengagement—has received much less attention. Social movement scholars have sometimes looked at it (for a review, see Fillieule 2015). Overall, however, we know much less about why and how people refrain from participating or abandon their engagement than we know about why they do participate. The remaining two chapters tackle this side of the coin. Viktor Valgarðsson, Gerry Stoker, Dan Devine, Jennifer Gaskell, and Will Jennings look in Chapter 43 at the relationship between disengagement and political trust across different types of engagement and regimes. They consider both disengagement from formal politics (specifically, voting) and from extra-institutional politics (specifically, demonstrations), clarifying the implications of disengagement on political trust and potentially regime support. Drawing on their recent book (Aytaç and Stokes 2019), Erdem Aytaç and Susan Stokes examine abstention in Chapter 44, but do so in an unconventional fashion by introducing the concept of costly abstention as a driver of mass political participation. As they say, the key idea behind costly abstention is the recognition that just as participation in politics is costly, abstention can be costly as well. As such, costly abstention helps to explain real-world patterns in electoral turnout and protest participation that are difficult to make sense of from the perspective of prevailing theoretical approaches.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes of political participation have arguably often been overlooked by researchers, perhaps due to the difficulty of tracing back potential outcomes to some observed changes. As such, much attention has been paid to studying why and how people get involved in politics, but we know much less about the consequences of such an involvement. Yet, knowing whether and how political participation may produce certain changes is crucial. After all, as we have seen earlier, political participation can be defined as actions by ordinary citizens directed towards influencing some political outcomes.

The field, however, is far from being underpopulated. On the one hand, if we widen our gaze, looked at from this angle, election studies often examine the outcomes of electoral behavior. On the other hand, students of social movements have paid increasing attention to these aspects, after having long neglected them. They often refer to three main kinds of potential outcomes: political, biographical, and cultural (Giugni 2008). More recently, increasing interest has also been paid to economic outcomes (Giugni and Grasso 2019a). Moreover, other scholars have been interested in examining how social movements may influence each other (Whittier 2004).

Broadly speaking, we may distinguish two broad kinds of potential outcomes of citizens' participation: micro-level and macro-level effects. Chapter 45, by Kenneth T. Andrews, Erica Janko, and Austin H. Vo, shifts attention to macro-level effects, akin to what social movement scholars refer to as political outcomes or cultural outcomes. They integrate insights from scholarship on voting, civic associations, social movements, public policy, culture, and political institutions to theorize the ways that macro changes may be shaped by mass political participation. Referring to what social movement scholars most often termed biographical consequences of activism (McAdam 1989), Chapter 46, by Silke Roth and Clare Saunders, examines micro-level effects. Their analysis is particularly instructive as it is not simply geared towards reviewing social movement research on biographical effects (for a review, see Passy and Monsch 2019), but examines the differential micro-level effects of a variety of forms of participation following an intersectional perspective.

That not all forms of participation are likely to produce the same effects is something well known by students of social movements, who have often examined the effects of specific protest tactics. For example, in his seminal study on the success of challenging groups, Gamson (1990) has shown that the strategic choices made by social movements—and, therefore, also the specific tactics used—matter to a great extent. Chapter 47, by Jennifer Oser, takes a different angle on the question of the effectiveness of different forms of political participation, relating this question to the connection between political participation and representation as well as to the main attitudinal measure related to effectiveness of political efficacy.

Taken together, all three chapters in this part of the volume stress a number of important points: first, that political participation matters; second, that participation has both micro-level and macro-level effects; third, that not all forms of participation matter to the same extent and in the same way. Future research on the effectiveness of political participation should not ignore these lessons and should push forward scholarship on these matters.

Current Trends and Future Directions

As we mentioned at the beginning, quoting Goodin (2009), a good Handbook should not simply take stock of existing scholarship on a given topic, but should also suggest avenues for further research on that topic. We believe that this goal is achieved throughout the chapters that form the present volume. This can be seen within single chapters, but it is especially visible in the four "bridging" chapters, which convey the message that combining perspectives, both theoretically and methodologically, is a fruitful avenue for research in this field. However, in order to stress this point even further, we asked some of the chapter authors to explicitly reflect on current trends as well as future directions with respect to political participation, in particular by referring to their own work.

These final chapters point to five issues which we believe are central to any discussion about the future of political participation and which are likely to represent a big chunk of the literature in this field. The first issue is addressed by Marcelo Santos and Sebastián Valenzuela in Chapter 48 and concerns the role of the media and, more specifically, how the changing media landscape affects patterns of political participation. Communication plays an important role for political participation. For example, it is unthinkable to hold elections without a pluralistic media system in democratic contexts. Similarly, the media are also crucial for social movements, as the latter draw their strength also by the public visibility of their actions (Tilly 1994). Thus, traditional media such as newspapers and the television have played—and continue to play—a key role in processes of mobilization, both electoral and nonelectoral. However, the media landscape has changed a lot in the past two decades, in particular with the development of the web, digital devices such as smartphones, and the advent of various digital platforms, remarkably social media. This has, amongst other things, led to the rise of online activism and "digitally networked participation" (Theocharis and van Deth 2017, 2018). More generally, the changing media landscape has inevitably had a deep impact on the forms and patterns of political participation and will certainly do even more so in the near future.

A second issue has to do with, so to speak, the scope conditions for the study of political participation. The latter has traditionally been characterized by a strong "Western-centrism," meaning that most research was done either on Europe or the US. More recently, the field has expanded to include other regions of the world, staring from Eastern Europe to reach out to other continents. In this regard, we need to move in two related directions. First, we need to study more thoroughly the determinants, processes, and outcomes of political participation in nondemocratic countries. Second, we need to compare patterns of participation in democratic and authoritarian regimes. Indeed, as Pippa Norris shows in Chapter 49, comparing mass participation in democratic and authoritarian regimes, the structure of opportunities for citizen activism in these two types of regimes diverges sharply. As a result, one may expect levels of mass participation to vary accordingly. Well-thought comparisons looking at similarities and differences not only across countries within a given political regime—namely, liberal democracies—but also across different regimes, hold much promise for improving our understanding of why and how citizens get involved in politics in diverse contexts.

A further issue refers to the role of political participation in a globalized world. In a way, this also has to do with the scope conditions, but vertically rather than horizontally so. The concept of globalization has permeated a variety of fields in political science, sociology, and still other disciplines in recent decades. In the field of political participation, this issue has captured quite a lot of attention by students of social movements, especially in the aftermath of the global justice movement of the late 1990s and earlier 2000s, but also more recently for the study of a variety of protests and movements that have crossed national borders, such as for example the Anti-Austerity (Grasso and Giugni 2013, 2016) Climate Strike (deMoor et al. 2021, Giugni and Grasso 2022), Black Lives Matter (Oliver 2021), and MeToo movements (Van Dyke et al. 2021). As Smith (2004: 314) has pointed out, "[m]ost social movement research takes for granted that the national state defines the relevant political space for political contenders. However, if globalization is indeed amplifying the importance of remote decision-making arenas for local actors, then we must consider how global factors shape the political contests within states." From there, research has focused more specifically on the conditions under which transnational coordinated collective action may arise (della Porta and Tarrow 2004; Tarrow 2001, 2005). More generally, as della Porta and Portos note in Chapter 50, since the beginning of the Millennium, attention to globalization as well as transnational forms of political participation has grown. As the chapter shows, processes of economic and cultural globalization have given rise to different kinds of movements, both on the left and the right of the political spectrum.

Recent scholarship on political participation has paid much attention to the role of young people (Earl et al. 2017; Bessant 2021; Giugni and Grasso 2020, 2021; Pickard 2019; Sloam and Henn 2019). One of the *leitmotifs* in this regard, especially in the political science and political sociology research tradition, has often been the increasing political apathy and alienation of youngsters. At the same time, works in the social movement tradition have often pointed to the fact that young people are most often involved in protest activities as well as in other kinds, including online protests, but also in newer forms that are captured by the term of "lifestyle politics" (de Moor 2017). Chapter 51, by Judith Bessant, discusses the role of youth for the future of political participation. She does so by looking at how this issue intersects with another key issue in political participation, namely the gender gap in politics. As she says, historically, girls and young women have been excluded from political activity, but in recent years they have begun engaging in politics in large numbers globally. Understanding why and how this is happening represents an important avenue for further research in this field (see Grasso and Smith 2021, Shorrocks and Grasso 2020).

Last but not least, discussions about current trends and future directions in relation to political participation cannot eschew an issue that has permeated much of the literature in this field and which gives the study of political participation its major relevance for the real world, namely that of political inequality (Grasso and Giugni 2021). The final chapter of this Handbook—Chapter 52 by Russell Dalton—addresses this fundamental issue, perhaps the most fundamental of all when it comes to political participation. As he points out, the foundation of democracy is the equal participation of its citizens in the political process. Drawing on his own work, he joins his voice to existing analyses that warn against a persistent gap in participation, and points to increasing social status biases in political voice across most established democracies. Research on political participation, regardless of the scholarly tradition from which it draws, should not only carry on the task of ascertaining this trend and explaining the reasons behind it, but should also importantly propose solutions looking into the future.

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PART I

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ACROSS DISCIPLINES

CHAPTER 2

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

KAY LEHMAN SCHLOZMAN AND HENRY E. BRADY

THE right of citizens to participate freely in political life is essential to democracy.[*] Acting on their own or with others, online or off, citizens in democracies can engage in a variety of acts with the intent or effect of influencing government, either indirectly through participation in the electoral process or directly through expressions of preferences. Although the menu varies from place to place, participatory acts include, most importantly, voting, as well as contacting a public official, signing a petition, attending a protest, joining a political party or an organization that takes stands in politics, working in a campaign, attending a rally, or donating money to a campaign or political cause.[1] When they take part, citizens can influence who holds governmental power and what they do with it, communicate preferences and needs for government action to public officials, and hold them accountable for their actions.[2]

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[*] This chapter is dedicated to Sidney Verba, a respected—and loved—member of the profession who pioneered the systematic study of the roots and consequences of citizen political participation. Our professional and personal lives were enriched by our three-decade collaboration with him.

[1] It is possible to expand this conception of political participation. Some analysts (see, for example, Jacobs, Cook, and Delli Carpini [2009]) include various activities that entail following or talking about politics rather than doing politics, among them, reading about politics in newspapers, engaging with political subjects on social media, or discussing politics with friends. Others (see, for example, Micheletti and McFarland [2010]) focus on the many ways of engaging in civic life that bypass the usual institutions of politics and government, for example political consumerism—that is, buying, or refusing to buy, products with the objective of achieving a public good. Anthropologists (see Chapter 6) have a particularly capacious understanding of political participation. Most discussions of the definition and categorization of political participation rely on analytic distinctions. An alternative approach is to show the sets of acts that cluster together empirically. See, among others, Teorell, Torcal, and Montero (2007); Ekman and Amnå (2012); van Deth (2014); and Theocharis and van Deth (2018).

[2] The meaning, purpose, and forms of political participation may be quite different under authoritarian regimes. For example, elections are common under authoritarian governments. However, when, as required, voters show up at the polls, they may find only a single candidate on the ballot, and the outcome is foreordained. Under such circumstances voting does not provide information about public

In light of its essential role in democracy, political scientists long made the multiple forms of political participation an object of inquiry: the study of political participation is central to the discipline of political science, and conversely political science is central to the study of political participation. That said, political scientists borrow liberally from perspectives of the other social sciences with the result that, when it comes to the understanding of political participation, disciplinary boundaries are quite blurry. From sociology, political science adopts the emphasis on the social structural roots of human experience, in particular the power of socioeconomic status (SES) in fostering political participation. From psychology, the power of experimental methods in establishing causality and the role of emotions, attitudes, identities and, especially, such psychological orientations to politics as political interest and efficacy in facilitating or inhibiting political activity. From economics, the utility of multivariate modeling as well as the rational choice lens, in particular the concept of the paradox of voting as well as of participation more generally. And, from geography, the multiple ways—beyond the impact of differences in the social characteristics of the inhabitants of different places—that geographical context matters. Still, for all the nourishment that political science draws from other disciplines, the study of citizen political participation and political power figures most centrally in the discipline of political science, and a very substantial share of the scholarly work has been conducted by political scientists.

In this essay, we look broadly at what political science has learned about political participation in democracies, where there has been progress in recent years—in particular, in the development of new methodologies that enhance the capacity to infer causality, the consideration of the psychological roots of political activity, and the investigation of the way that the context of political institutions and rules shapes political activity—and the areas where further exploration is likely to produce fruitful results. Considerations of space dictate that, regrettably, our scholarly references are illustrative rather than complete. Moreover, although there is a growing literature in other parts of the world, especially Europe, our citations reflect the tendency for systematic investigations of political participation, including our own, to focus on the Unites States.[3]

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preferences but instead functions as the expression of a ritualized affirmation of the regime. In this context, abstention may be a costly act that expresses dissatisfaction with the regime and a desire for change. See, for example, Brady and Kaplan's (2001) study of voting patterns in Estonia before, during, and after the breakup of the Soviet Union.

[3] Evidence of the weight of inquiries anchored in data from the United States can be found in a recent review of 20 years of studies of the relationship between digital media and civic and political engagement (Boulianne 2020). Table 2.1 summarizes the results of studies conducted in 18 countries. Of the 243 studies, 127 are of the United States. In second place is China with 14 studies. It is striking that many studies of nations other than the United States are published in American academic journals—even when the authors do not come from the United States and are associated with institutions outside the United States. While there are numerous cross-national studies of voting (see, for example, the analysis and extensive citations in Blais [2000]), studies of other forms of political participation tend to focus on a single country, whether the United States or elsewhere. Notable exceptions of inquiries that are comparative across multiple nations include Verba, Nie, and Kim (1978); Barnes, Kaase et al. (1979); Grasso (2016); and Giugni and Grasso (2019).

RESOURCES, MOBILIZATION, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

In their investigation of the extent to which polling-place inaccessibility contributes to the explanation of the disability gap in voter turnout, Schur, Ameri, and Adya (2017: 1375) indicate that "while standard measures of resources, recruitment, and psychological factors play a role, they do not fully explain the lower turnout of people with disabilities." We are not surprised that this trio of factors is not up to the task of a complete explanation of the outcome under scrutiny, but we are pleased to see them described as the "standard" measures. These three sets of factors form the core of what, in a study conducted some time ago with Sidney Verba, we called the "Civic Voluntarism Model."[4] Our goal had been to go beyond the earlier standard "socioeconomic model" to provide a broad consideration of the factors that facilitate political participation in the United States—and, perhaps, in other affluent democracies. We are glad to see that subsequent inquiries have expanded greatly upon the insights of the Civic Voluntarism Model.

To approach the question, "Why are people active in politics?" it is helpful to invert the question and to ask instead: "Why don't people take part in politics?" Three answers immediately suggest themselves: because they can't; because they don't want to; or because nobody asked.

- "They can't" points to a paucity of necessary resources—time to take part, money to contribute to campaigns and other political causes, and skills to use time and money effectively.
- "They don't want to" focuses attention on the absence of psychological engagement with politics—little interest in politics or public issues, a belief that activity can make little or no difference, lack of knowledge about the political process, or other priorities.
- "Nobody asked" implies isolation from the networks of recruitment through which citizens are mobilized to politics.

All three factors help predict participation. Access to resources, the capacity to take part, and psychological engagement with politics, the motivation to take part, seem necessary for activity. Recruitment, being asked to take part, seems to act as a catalyst for participation among those with the wherewithal and desire to become active. In addition, not surprisingly, issue commitments—for example, having a direct stake in some government policy or caring passionately about a controversial issue—can stimulate activity with regard to that issue. As shown in Table 2.1, different configurations of participatory factors matter for different forms of activity.

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[4] See Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995). A much simplified version of the Civic Voluntarism Model can be found in Chapter 3 of Schlozman, Brady, and Verba (2018).

Table 2.1 The Factors that Foster Participation

	Substantial Effect	Some Effect
OVERALL PARTICIPATION	Education	Politics at home
	High-school activity	Free time
	Income	Recruitment
	Civic skills	
	Political interest	
	Political information	
	Citizenship	
VOTING	Political interest	Politics at home
	Political information	High-school activity
	Partisan strength	Religious attendance
	Citizenship	Political efficacy
		Recruitment
TIME-BASED ACTS	Education	High-school activity
	Civic skills	Free time
	Political interest	Political information
	Recruitment	Political efficacy
POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS	Income	Political interest

Source: Schlozman, Brady, and Verba (2018: 74).

Because They Can: Resources

Political scientists have long recognized the relationship between SES and a variety of political attitudes and behaviors including, for example, political interest, tolerance for the expression of unpopular views, opposition to the death penalty—and political participation. There was, however, limited understanding of the inner workings of these relationships: how the components of SES—education, income, and occupation—fit together, and the causal path linking SES to political activity.

The puzzle of the strong relationship between SES and participation—one that obtains across democracies but is especially powerful in the United States—led us to look "beyond SES" and to place resources at the center of attempts to explain who takes part. The resources meriting special emphasis are money, time, and civic skills. For most people, resource acquisition takes place apart from politics, which means that resources are less likely than either psychological engagement with politics or requests for political activity to be the result, rather than the cause, of activity. Focusing on resources provides a powerful and theoretically satisfying explanation of disparities across individuals and groups in the extent to which they take part in political life. And since resources are differentially available to those with differing political needs and preferences, paying attention to resources links directly to a concern with political equality.

The utility of particular resources varies across participatory acts. Contributions to candidates or political causes, a mode of activism that has recently skyrocketed in relative importance in the United States, obviously demand money. Other forms of political activity—protesting, informal efforts to solve community problems, even voting—require time. Finally, the citizen who possesses the requisite organizational and communications capacities—what we call civic skills—will find it less daunting to take part. Indeed, when inputs of time and money are coupled to civic skills, citizens become not only more likely to participate but also more likely to be effective when they do. Although the participatory possibilities of the internet and, slightly later, social media, were initially hailed as democratizing developments, taking part on the internet or through social media turns out, at least in the United States, to be characterized by the same resourced-based inequalities as other forms of activity. However, online participation is associated with an amelioration of age-based disparities in political activity.[5]

Part of the process of unpacking the relationship between SES and political participation involved probing the close relationship between educational attainment and political participation. We found education connected to many of the other factors that foster political activity. Education enhances participation more or less directly by developing skills that are relevant to politics—the ability to speak and write, the knowledge of how to cope in an organizational setting. Education also imparts information about government and politics and nurtures such orientations as a sense of civic responsibility or political efficacy that predispose an individual to political involvement. The participatory consequences of schooling are not limited to the classroom: taking part in extra-curricular activities in high school—in particular, student government but also various clubs and activities—has a positive impact on later political activity. In addition, education affects activity indirectly: the well-educated are more likely to command lucrative jobs, exercise leadership, and develop politically relevant skills at work, in church, and in voluntary associations.

Subsequent research moves beyond "beyond SES," both critiquing and elaborating upon these insights. For example, health has consequences for participation.[6] In addition, the causal connection between education and political participation has generated extensive controversy.[7] One perspective (Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996) holds that—rather than actually inculcating civic skills, imparting political information, or fostering political interest—educational attainment acts as a sorting mechanism, placing those who achieve educationally into occupational situations and social networks that facilitate political participation. In contrast, Kam and Palmer (2008) argue that higher education does not cause political activity but functions instead as a proxy for capacities and values developed earlier at home and school. To make matters more complicated, on the basis of studies of identical twins, Dinesen et al. (2016) demonstrate that the impact of education is not invariant across contexts—stronger in the United States than in Denmark or, especially, Sweden, where it has no effect. One possible explanation for these disparate findings is that education needs to be unpacked into different components such as cognitive and non-cognitive skills (Holbein and Hillygus 2020) that have different impacts on participation.

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[5] See the data and citations in Schlozman, Brady, and Verba (2018: Chap. 6). On the role of life-cycle and generational factors in shaping political participation, see Zukin et al. (2006); Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (2012: Chap. 8); and Pagis (2018).

[6] Among others, see Burden et al. (2017) and Ojeda and Pacheco (2017).

[7] For a review of the considerable literature on this topic, see Dinesen et al. (2016). See also, the extensive citations in Chatfield and Henderson (2016).

Beyond the concern with making causal links, the association between resources and political participation raises the issue of equal citizen voice in a democracy. Because the resource-disadvantaged are less active, public officials hear less from them about their preferences and needs for government action. This dilemma is especially complicated with regard to resource-disadvantaged groups defined by a characteristic other than class disadvantage. Consider, for example, Harijans in India and Blacks in the United States—groups with distinctive political problems and perspectives growing out of their distinctive histories and experiences.[8] Both Harijans and Blacks are disadvantaged relative to the dominant groups in their respective societies. Both groups are also relatively inactive politically, deficits that can be explained fully by disparities in participatory resources, disparities that are, in turn, intimately bound up with long histories of disadvantage and discrimination. However, the fact that SES disadvantage accounts for their relative inactivity does not change the fact that their political voices are muted and that their shared problems and joint political demands are less likely to be brought to the attention of those in a position to respond. In democracies around the world, this pattern appears in varied manifestations for a diversity of politically relevant groups—defined by, among others, such characteristics as race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity—groups whose resource deficits and shared political needs and objectives are related to their unique histories and experiences.

Because They Want To: Psychological Orientations

People with equivalent bundles of participatory resources differ in their actual activity. Those who choose to devote scarce resources to political activity rather than to other pursuits differ in their psychological orientations to politics. Of the numerous measures of psychological engagement with politics, several are conceptually distinct and related to political participation: political interest, caring about politics and political outcomes and following political developments; political efficacy, the belief that it could make a difference if one got involved; political information, the only one that is measured objectively rather than subjectively; strength of partisanship; and having a strong commitment on a political issue.

For several reasons, such psychological orientations to politics figure less importantly than resources in our understanding of the causes of participation. First, being politically interested, knowledgeable, or efficacious may enhance the likelihood that an individual will be active; but reciprocally, being active may increase interest, information, and efficacy. Causality can go from activism to engagement as well as from engagement to activism. Second, the fact that psychological engagement is so close to that which is being explained, political participation, renders less interesting an explanation based on psychological orientations. That people who are politically interested are politically active seems to tell us less than an explanation based on resources, which have their origins in commitments and involvements further removed from politics. Third, we have more confidence in our ability to measure resources, which are concrete and based on units having standard metrics, than in our ability to measure these psychological orientations. Finally, resource-based explanations of participation are relevant for real issues of politics: conflicts between the rich and the poor—or between those with rewarding, skill-producing work and those with lesser employment or no work at all—are surely more common than competition between the interested and the indifferent or between the confident and the inefficacious.

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[8] The discussion in this paragraph draws from Verba, Ahmed, and Bhatt (1971).

Nevertheless, psychological orientations and identities do matter, and in recent decades, scholars have made substantial advances with respect to both method and substance in understanding their implications for political participation. With regard to method, the adoption of experimental and quasi-experimental statistical methods (e.g., difference-in-difference designs, matching, regression discontinuity, and instrumental variables) have made it possible to untangle statistical relationships and establish causal links. Adding these methods to ones long used in political science and drawing data from many democracies beyond the United States, researchers have extended the list to include such psychological orientations to politics as sense of civic duty and satisfaction with democracy that are also related to political activity; elaborated our understanding of how these psychological orientations operate as both dependent and independent variables; and focused on particular sub-groups, especially the young.[9] In addition, they have refined what we know about the role of ideological orientations, political values, and issue attitudes in fostering participation. A rich lode of inquiry focuses on politically salient identities based on such attributes as race or ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity—how they are created and enhanced and how they affect political participation—especially among intersectional groups for whom more than one such identity is at stake.[10] These studies of the impact of psychological orientations to politics defy easy summary. Various psychological predispositions are ordinarily, but not always, found to enhance political activity. The results are often contingent—varying in ways that are not always predictable depending upon the particular psychological orientation, the particular form of participation, the particular group, and the political context under consideration.

Researchers have also explored the participatory consequences of experiences and psychological orientations less obviously connected to politics, ranging from service in the armed forces to depression.[11] Inquiries into the impact of the "Big Five" personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience) have yielded somewhat mixed results. Perhaps not surprisingly, the most consistent results are between extraversion and participatory acts that involve dealing with others. Still a cross-national study involving 24 countries in North, Central, and South America and a number of measures of political participation shows the effects of the Big Five to vary considerably across countries.[12] Studies of psychological predispositions more distant from politics are compelling because they obviate the questions of causal direction raised by the association between, for example, political interest or information and political participation. However, the meaning of such results for how we are governed is less apparent. We have some grasp of what difference it might make that investment bankers command a political megaphone and public-housing tenants barely whisper. It is less clear what it means that the extraverts drown out the introverts.

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[9] Krupnikov and Levine (2016) discuss the psychological processes relevant to such seemingly concrete factors as resources and mobilization and provide extensive citations to the literature from political psychology.

[10] Recent examples include Holbrook, Sterrett, Johnson, and Krysan (2016); Valenzuela and Michelson (2016); Wolfsfeld, Yarchi, and Samuel-Azran (2016); Adam (2017); Galais (2018); Kostelka and Blais (2018); Blais and Achen (2019); Grasso and Giugni (2019); Krupnikov and Levine (2019); Levy and Akiva (2019); Moreau, Nuño-Pérez, and Sanchez (2019).

[11] See Usry (2019).

Because Somebody Asked: Political Mobilization

In a majority of cases, individual political activists are self-starters who are excited about issues, connect politics to their basic commitments and concerns, or get involved out of a sense of civic duty. Frequently, however, they become active because someone asked.[13] The role of parties and campaign organizations in recruiting campaign workers and donors and mobilizing voters to get to the polls is widely recognized.[14] In an era of digital communications and social media, recruiting others to take part has become easier.[15]

Even before the social movements of the 1960s made it self-evident, social science researchers knew that processes of grassroots mobilization often bring new issues and new perspectives into politics. Bottom-up movements of outsider constituencies—for example, colonial subjects, industrial workers, supporters of votes for women, and opponents of immigration—have catalyzed political and social change throughout history. Yet, a broad consideration of processes of recruitment to political action produces a more complicated picture than what emerges from a focus on social movements among the disadvantaged. For one thing, those mobilized by social movements—for example, animal rights or environmental activists—may be drawn from the middle class rather than the dispossessed.[16] Such movements may, like the Christian Right in the United States and anti-immigrant groups in many rich democracies, arise on the right rather than the left.

Less newsworthy and potentially less transformative—and less often studied—than social movements are the ordinary processes by which people are recruited to political activity.

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[12] See Weinschenck (2017). See also, among others, Mondak (2010, Chap. 6); Gerber et al. (2011); Hassell and Settle (2017); Guttierrez, Ocampo, Barret, and Segura (2019).

[13] A more detailed version of the argument in this section and extensive supporting references can be found in Chapters 3 and 7 of Schlozman, Brady, and Verba (2018).

[14] See Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), who demonstrate the impact of such mobilization on electoral activity and link a decline over time in electoral mobilization to a decline in electoral participation between the 1960s and the 1980s.

[15] See for example, the data about the United States, Spain, Turkey, and Ukraine in Jost et al. (2018).

[16] Using cross-nation data from European democracies, Giugni and Grasso (2019) show that the well-educated are overrepresented among protesters.

Requests to take part politically arise from a variety of sources: through social media, or in a sermon at church, or from the newsletter of an organization of which one is a member, or directly from a friend, neighbor, or co-worker. Because those who attempt to get others involved in politics act as "rational prospectors," the ordinary processes through which people are asked to take part do not ameliorate the class bias in individual political voice.[17] Seeking to get results as efficiently as possible, rational prospectors aim their requests at those who are likely not only to say yes but also, on assenting, to participate effectively. Often they target people who have been active in the past. The upshot is that participation undertaken in response to requests from others brings in a disproportionate share of previous activists, which in turn exaggerates the SES bias of political participation. In this way, ordinary processes of recruitment to political involvement do not simply replicate the socioeconomic structuring of political participation: they actually amplify it.

Political scientists increasingly use field experiments—that is, randomized experiments undertaken in the context of actual political events—to assess the impact of interventions designed to mobilize political activity and to see what actually works.[18] Like all experiments designed to understand political behavior, field experiments permit surer inferences of causality. (For extensive discussion of field experiments, see Chapter 15.)

Individuals in Context

While the characteristics of individuals matter for participation, contextual factors as disparate as the growing availability of television as a time-consuming leisure outlet after World War II[19] and growing economic inequality in affluent democracies[20] are associated with reductions in political activity. Although political science investigations of political participation are often based on surveys of individuals, an important contribution of such studies, has been to place individuals in the context of social institutions and to demonstrate how institutional contexts shape the factors that foster or inhibit political activity. From cradle to grave, the non-political institutions in which we come of age and spend our adult lives influence the acquisition of the factors that foster or inhibit political activity. Experiences in the family, at school, in the workplace, in voluntary organizations, and in church affect the resources, motivations, and exposures to political mobilization that, in turn, affect political participation.

This process of development begins at home in the family.[21] Students of political socialization discern two mechanisms through which home and family background influence children's eventual participation. The first emphasizes political learning. In the family, active parents serve as role models for their children, who absorb cues and lessons about politics and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Because parents who are well-educated and affluent tend to be more politically active and to create homes that are rich in political stimuli, parents' SES is associated with the level of political participation of their offspring as adults. A second mechanism, which operates even more powerfully in the United States, links children's family background to their eventual political activity through the inter-generational transmission of social class. Parents' social class affects the ultimate socioeconomic position of their children—including the education they receive, the jobs they get as adults, and the incomes they earn which, in turn, shape multiple other participation-enhancing factors. In sum, at least in the United States, children who have the good fortune to be born to well-educated, affluent parents are not only more likely to grow up in a politically stimulating environment but also more likely as adults to achieve positions and statuses that facilitate political participation.

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[17] Rosenstone and Hansen (1993: Chap. 6) provide compelling evidence for this process in their analysis of what they call "targeted mobilization."

[18] See, in particular, Green and Gerber (2019). They have conducted extensive field experiments in the context of GOTV (Get Out the Vote) drives. See also, Hill and Kousser (2016); de Rooij and Green (2017); and Larson, Nagler, Ronen, and Tucker (2019).

[19] See Putnam (2000: Chap. 13).

[20] See Solt (2008).

[21] For elaboration and extensive citations to the literature, see Verba, Schlozman, and Burns (2005); Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (2012: Chap. 7); and Brady, Schlozman, and Verba (2015). Fieldhouse and Cutts (2016) and Foos and de Rooij (2017) demonstrate the effects of family environment on political values and electoral turnout in the United Kingdom.

A second institutional setting with the potential to influence adult political activity is school. What explains the strong association between educational attainment and political participation? Does schooling impart skills and orientations conducive to political activity? Or is there a selection process such that the same attributes that encourage educational success also facilitate political participation? Among those who believe that education is not merely a sorting mechanism but that schools actually impart information, inculcate skills, and nurture democratic norms and psychological orientations relevant to political action, consensus is elusive as to the relative effectiveness of various approaches to enhancing students' future civic engagement and political participation—among them, such favorites as classroom-based civics education, service learning programs, and high-school activities such as student government and clubs.[22]

The association between experiences in institutional contexts and political participation continues into adulthood. Several of the most important non-political institutions of adult life operate to enhance the factors that foster political activity. Non-political activities at work, in church, and in voluntary associations expose adults to political cues and messages, provide opportunities to develop organizational and communications skills relevant to politics, and become the targets of requests for political activity.[23] These participation-enhancing processes do not work in the same way in all non-political institutions, and individuals affiliated with these institutions are not equally likely to benefit. For example, the workplace is an especially fertile ground for the development of civic skills, but opportunities for the exercise of civic skills at work accrue very disproportionately to the well-educated. In contrast, opportunities for skill development are less common in religious institutions, especially those organized hierarchically. However, because religious congregations tend to be more segregated with respect to class, church members with lower levels of educational attainment are more likely to exercise civic skills in church than at work. When it comes to political mobilization in non-political institutions, some American corporations subject employees to pressure from management to take political actions favorable to the company—even if such actions are not especially congenial to the employee.[24]

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[22] For discussion of various school-based approaches to fostering future political participation and references to relevant studies, see Schlozman, Verba, and Brady (2012: Chap. 17). Holbein (2017) reports that two decades afterwards, the randomly selected students who had been taught psychosocial skills in a school-based experiment showed many positive attributes, including significantly higher rates of voter turnout.

[23] On these processes see, the data and citations in Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995); Gerber, Gruber, and Hungerman (2015); Campbell (2016); Flavin (2016); and Rasmussen and Reher (2019). Raising an issue to which we have referred, van Ingen and van der Meer (2016) use data from the Netherlands to show that the apparent influence of voluntary association membership is, in fact, a selection effect such that people with the characteristics that predispose them to take part politically are likely to join voluntary associations.

Beyond the sometimes surprising ways that non-political institutions shape adult political activity, are explicitly political experiences in such institutions. The myriad voluntary associations that take stands in politics—including, for example, professional associations, civil rights organizations, and environmental groups—provide political exposure, inculcate political skills, and mobilize members to political action. Membership in such voluntary organizations tilts in the direction of the well-educated and the affluent. Labor unions stand more or less alone as organizational sites for skill development and political activation among the less advantaged. With the drastic decline in membership of private-sector unions in many democracies, especially the United States, such politicizing opportunities are available to fewer and fewer workers of limited education.

In emphasizing the way that institutional contexts have implications for the political participation, we should not overlook geographical context. For discussion of the multiple ways that place matters, see Chapters 28–31.

THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Political context also influences individual participation. Beyond individual characteristics and their social contexts, the characteristics of political systems and institutions matter for who takes part how much. Most obvious are laws, which have varied through history and across nations, that define who has access to the ballot. Historically, exclusions differed across democracies and included such attributes as race, immigrant status, and status as an Indigenous person, as well as, almost universally, propertylessness, gender, and age.[25] Beyond control of the franchise, government actions have historically shaped participatory opportunities. A dramatic case is what happened in the late nineteenth century after the end of Reconstruction in the states of the American South. Jim Crow laws—coupled with discriminatory practices in law enforcement and the administration of justice—stifled political participation and suppressed many other civil liberties and rights for African Americans. Less dramatically, for centuries, women were denied by law and custom not only the franchise but also such basic citizenship rights as the right to testify in court, serve on a jury, or speak at a public meeting.

Central to political scientists' concern with the role of political participation in a democracy is the way that characteristics of democratic political institutions also influence individuals' decisions to become active in various ways. Multiple factors ranging from political culture, the competitiveness of elections, and the configuration of the party system to the rules governing elections and campaign finance affect political participation. Scholars investigating the links between political institutions and political activity tend to focus on voter turnout among participatory acts.[26]

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[24] See Hertel-Fernandez (2018).

[25] On the enfranchisement of women in nations around the world, see Nelson and Chowdhury (1994). For history of expansions and contractions of ballot access in the United States, see Keyssar (2009).

With its complicated history of early enfranchisement of white men and vote suppression based on race and class and its relatively low rates of electoral turnout, a disproportionate share of the research treats the United States.[27] The standard interpretation of the historically low American turnout rates points to two aspects of the political context: weak political parties and registration laws that place responsibility for registration on the individual voter. Institutional arrangements in other affluent democracies function in several ways to facilitate voter turnout. Not only is voter registration a government responsibility, but elections may be held on weekends or over a period longer than a single day. Although failure to go to the polls may not be punished, voting is compulsory in more than two dozen countries, a requirement that has the effect of both raising and equalizing turnout.[28] The United States is currently in a period of contradictory trends with regard to the regulations that affect voter turnout with the political parties polarized over the issue.[29]

Conducting political campaigns is expensive. The regulations and practices surrounding campaign finance vary substantially across democracies.[30] Democracies differ in the extent to which the system of campaign finance relies on the public treasury or, instead, on contributions from individuals and in the freedom to donate unlimited sums. The United States—where the federal courts increasingly define making political contributions as a form of speech protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution—is an outlier when it comes to its permissive campaign-finance regime. Because citizens are more unequal when it comes to economic wherewithal than the amount of leisure they enjoy or civic skills they command, as a form of political participation, donating to politics is sharply skewed in the direction of the affluent who are not only more likely to make political contributions, but to give generously when they donate.

The multiple ways that political institutions affect participation, especially electoral participation, remind us of the more general observation that "policy makes politics," a perspective that joins the concerns of policy analysts and students of democratic political behavior. Scholars have shown that the details of the design of policies have consequences for citizen participation. In the United States, such non-means-tested programs as the G.I. Bill and benefits for the elderly are positively associated with political activity, an outcome that does not obtain for recipients of means-tested income support.[31] In short, beyond the characteristics of individuals and the institutions that shape them throughout the life course, how governments are organized and how they do what they do have implications for political participation.

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[26] Examples of cross-national investigations of turnout include Lijphart (1997) and Kostelka (2017). On the implications for individual turnout of the number and array of parties, see Wilford (2017). An exception to the focus on turnout is Vráblíková (2014) who focuses upon the impact of institutional decentralization on nonelectoral participation.

[27] On the history of the right to vote in the United States, see Keyssar (2009). Powell (1986) provides the classic explanation for low turnout in the United States.

[28] Ordinarily, the SES bias in turnout decreases as turnout rises. However, Cepaluni and Hidalgo (2016) find that compulsory voting (CV) actually exacerbates income inequalities in turnout in Brazil. On the basis of election data from Australia, Belgium, and Brazil, Dassonneville et al. (2019) find that reluctant voters brought to the polls by CV tend to cast ballots of "lower quality;" that is, they are less likely to vote for the ideologically most proximate party.

[29] For a summary of developments and relevant citations, see Schlozman, Brady, and Verba (2018, pp. 231–243). On the various aspects of the increasing barriers to turnout see, for example, Keyssar (2009, Chap. 8); Bright and Lynch (2017); Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson (2017); Rhodes (2017); Astor (2018); Burden (2018); Fresh (2018); Grimmer et al. (2018); Hajnal, Kuk, and Lajevardi (2018); and Harris (2020).

[30] For discussion and comparative data about campaign-finance arrangements across democracies, see, among others, Scarrow (2007) and Norris and Abel van Es (2016).

Does Political Participation Matter?

The processes we have outlined imply that, in many ways, political activists are not representative of the broader publics from which they are drawn. Of course, the extent to which political voice expressed through the medium of public action is unrepresentative varies across polities and political acts. Still, that political activists are skewed with respect to such characteristics as class, race or ethnicity, age, gender, and sexual orientation, opinions on issues, and preferences and needs for government action implies that a skewed set of messages is being directed at public officials.

If, for whatever reason, political voice has no influence on policy, no matter how unrepresentative politically it might be, it would be irrelevant for democratic equality.[32] Ascertaining whether the political voice expressed through political activity has an impact on policy is extremely challenging. It is easy to list controversies in American politics in which citizen participation resulted in favorable policy change and equally easy to find cases in which activists failed to achieve their objectives.

Multiple studies using differing methods and data provide evidence that public officials do heed what they hear from citizen activists—who tend, as we have seen, to be more advantaged—with the result that policy responds to their particular preferences and needs.[33] Some argue that policymakers compensate for the fact that they hear so much less from the disadvantaged by engaging in a kind of affirmative action in order to respond to the politically quiescent. However, evidence across levels of American government suggests that, if anything, they do the opposite: policymakers do not seem to seek out and respond to information about the preferences and needs of lower-income constituents. In fact, they seem to be especially responsive to upper-income constituents—in particular, to donors.[34]

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[31] This argument is presented and supported with extensive citations in Campbell (2012). See also Soss (2000) and Mettler (2005).

[32] For further discussion of this issue, see the discussion and citations in Schlozman, Brady, and Verba (2018: 35–48).

[33] See, for example, Verba and Nie, (1972: 301–308) and Chaps. 17 and 18; Hill and Leighley (1992); Hill, Leighley, and Hinton-Andersson (1995); Campbell (2003); Trounstine and Hajnal (2005); Bergan (2009); Leighley and Oser (2018); and Anzia (2019).

[34] See, for example, Druckman and Jacobs (2001); Rigby and Wright (2001); Hayes (2012); Flavin (2012); Gilens (2012, Chaps. 3-4); Rigby and Wright (2013) Gilens and Page (2014); Barber (2016); Kalla and Broockman (2016); and Bartels, (2016: Chap.8).

Furthermore, there is evidence of analogous inequalities on the basis of race or ethnicity in governmental response.[35]

What Do We Need to Know?

This brief review of what political science knows about citizen political participation demonstrates that we know a lot about who takes part, in what ways, and with what effect. Recent decades have witnessed dozens of studies that build productively on what we know about the origins of political activity in resources, psychological orientations to politics, and political mobilization, and extend our understanding into new territory. With respect to substance, progress has been especially notable with regard to the roots of political activity in psychological orientations. When it comes to methods, we have gained surer footing in inferring causality from the refinement and use of experiments and quasi-experimental statistical methods in political science.

But there is much work still to do. Even with respect to the individual-level variable that, across political acts and across democracies, is most consistently associated with political participation, educational attainment, disagreements flare as to whether or not it really functions to spur activity. We need to continue to observe the multiple and mixed consequences for democracy of rapidly changing technologies—in particular, their consequences for the frequency, forms, distribution, and representativeness of political participation. We need to broaden the purview of the meaning of democratic participation beyond electoral turnout to investigate the range of participatory acts, including those that require investments of money rather than time. We need to elaborate our understanding of whether—and under what circumstances—political participation has an impact. We need to conduct more studies of political activity in contexts other than the United States and, especially, to conduct more genuinely comparative studies that involve systematic data across democracies. And, as we continue to march forward, we must never forget to ask both "Why?" and "What difference does it make?"

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[35] See Griffin and Newman (2008: 195–196, and *passim*); Butler and Broockman (2011); Griffin and Newman (2013); and Avery, Fine, and Màrquez (2017).

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CHAPTER 3

SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

NONNA MAYER

Tracing borders between sociology and other social sciences, particularly political science, especially when it comes to research on political participation, is more than ever a hard task, at a time when research is increasingly interdisciplinary and fragmented. The very nature of sociology is regularly questioned, as illustrated by the recent restaging of the 1903 debate between Emile Durkheim and Gabriel Tarde, opposing holistic to individualistic conceptions of the social (Candea 2015). The perspective of this chapter is sociological insofar as it assumes that all human actions have a social logic (Zuckerman 2005), even the most personal, such as committing suicide, marrying, choosing a name for one's child, or voting in the secret of the voting booth. It combines Tarde and Durkheim's legacy, considering that individuals make society as much as society makes individuals.

Defining political participation is not easy either, considering the continuous expansion of the political action repertoire and of the realm of politics (Theocharis and Van Deth 2018). First limited to citizens' activities aimed at influencing the selection and decisions of governmental personnel, it has gradually included all forms of protest (Barnes and Kaase 1979), political consumerism (Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti 2005), and the multiple forms of digital participation (Robles-Morales et al. 2019). This proliferating research field shows two contrasted trends. Electoral participation, as emblematic of the "conventional," "institutionalized," or "elite-directed" forms of participation, is declining. Protest activities, as emblematic of the "unconventional," "non-institutionalized," "elite-challenging" actions, are flourishing.

The chapter is focused on the contribution sociology brings to the understanding of political participation. Taking a sociological perspective expands the scope of politics to non-political settings—family, workplace, church, associations—which are essential vectors of political socialization. It uncovers the social roots of political inequalities and domination. It replaces the individuals in the various groups they belong to, that forge their identity and sense of belonging. Last, it connects political involvement with social interactions, conversations, and networks. The first section of this chapter briefly presents the main sociological theories explaining turnout, the second one those explaining protest and social movements. A third section assesses what they bring to our understanding of political participation in the turbulent twenty-first century. The conclusion explores avenues for future research.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF (NON)VOTING

Voting is still by far the most frequent act of political participation, at the core of democratic citizenship.[1] Yet, whatever the election, a variable proportion of potential voters abstain, and their average proportion has been steadily growing.[2] The political context—institutional frame, nature of the election, candidates and issues at stake, competitiveness of the electoral race—is part of the explanation. Nevertheless, social factors also are at play, especially resources linked to social position and mobilizing interactions and networks.

Social Position

The pioneer American surveys of the post-war behavioral era showed that participation was skewed in favor of higher-status groups in society, those who have the necessary resources (education, money, cognitive skills, relations) and attendant participatory attitudes (interest, trust, and sense of efficacy).[3] Conversely, the absence of such resources favored political disaffection. European studies found similar results, albeit framed differently. In France, for instance, where social sciences have a strong Marxist tradition, participation was traditionally analyzed in terms of class conflict and domination rather than social status. In the "critical sociology" perspective opened up by Pierre Bourdieu, representative democracy was a lure, a machine of exclusion operating for the benefit of the upper classes. The "dominated" (working class, women, youth, rural dwellers, immigrants) were dispossessed, lacking not only the objective political competence (education, information) but the subjective political competence, the sense of being legitimate and capable of taking part in the political game.

These various obstacles are not necessarily cumulative. For example, group consciousness, the feeling of belonging to a group and of sharing a collective identity, can compensate for a deficit in socioeconomic resources. The new social movements of the 1960s forced research to bring into the picture gender, race, ethnicity, and their specific and intertwined impact on political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Burns 2005). Thus, African Americans born between 1946 and 1960, who were adolescent during the struggles for the Civil Rights, were more politicized and active than the other generations, and more so than White Americans or Latino Americans of the same age. In the same way, the feminist mobilizations of the 1960s were the starting point for gender studies as such, which showed the diffusion of emancipatory values among women. Gradually, their level of turnout would catch up, then surpass the level of men's (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001). While in France, Guy Michelat and Michel Simon (1982) showed that uneducated and working-class people could acquire, via their family, their workfellows, their unions, and associations, even a higher political competence, and thus a greater potential for action, than educated members of the upper class. Until the 1970s, during the years when the French Communist party had a strong working-class base and mobilized its supporters, abstention increased with the level of education (Lancelot 1968: 188–189).

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[1] In a recent 14 nations face-to-face Pew survey, 78% of the sample declared having voted at least once in the past vs 14% taking part in an organized protest: (https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2018/10/17/international-political-engagement/, May–August 2018).

[2] Between 1990 and 2015 in European established democracies, the rates have dropped by 10% and in post-communist democracies by 20% (IDEA 2016: https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/voter-turnout-trends-around-the-world.pdf:25).

[3] On the SES (Socio Economic Status), the Resource and the Civic Voluntarism models, see Chapter 2 on political science.

However, the transition from industrial to post-industrial economy, the rise of a knowledge society, the diffusion of post-materialist values stressing autonomy and self-expression, weakened objective and subjective group-ties. A comparison of 22 European countries on the base of the 2004 wave of the European Social Survey (ESS) showed that, all things being equal, age and education were by far the major predictors, before class position or ethnicity (Gallego 2007). A larger-scale analysis confirmed the decisive impact of education and showed that the existence of strong left-wing parties and unions did not reduce turnout inequalities as they used to (Gallego 2010).

Interpreting correlations between age and participation is not simple. Age can reflect period, life-cycle, and cohort effects (Grasso 2014). In the above-mentioned surveys, the fact that the relation with age is curvilinear, with turnout dropping at the two ends of the age distribution, suggests life-cycle effects. Young people before 25 are finishing their studies, looking for a job, searching for a partner. Political insertion comes after social insertion, after a phase of experimentation. Turnout is maximal among middle-aged voters in activity and decreases again after 75, when social isolation and health problems tend to disconnect the elderly from politics. Generational turnover is another key factor. The post-baby-boom cohorts tend to abstain more, in spite of their unprecedented level of education (Franklin 2004; Tiberj 2017). They are the most attached to the post-materialist, individualistic, and irreverent values, therefore less inclined to consider voting as a duty, attracted by other forms of political engagement (Dalton 2021). They also reached voting age in a more difficult context than the post-war generations. This is particularly true in Europe where the two oil shocks put an end to the "thirty glorious years" of post-war economic growth. Compared to the baby boomers at the same age they are more often unemployed, or in insecure atypical jobs, with lower incomes, lower prospects of upward mobility, lower social protection and pensions, etc.

The interpretation of the relation between education and turnout is more complex. Education could affect turnout directly by developing interest in politics, related knowledge and skills, feelings of competence and efficacy, or indirectly, acting as a proxy of social status. The fact that the rise of the educational level in post-industrial democracies has not brought about an increase but a decrease in voter turnout at the aggregate level has stimulated research attempting to solve the "puzzle of political participation" (Brody 1978), with contrasting findings. Some authors, on the base of long-run randomized experiments in which educational attainment is exogenously altered, defend the existence of a strong causal link between education and turnout (Sondheimer and Green 2010), while others, on the base of large-scale comparative multi-level analyses, consider the correlation spurious (Persson 2013). If education is just a proxy for status and access to networks, it is the relative position in the educational hierarchy that counts. When more people engage in higher education in the same cohort, it decreases the value of their degree, hence the individual-level effect of schooling (Grasso 2013).

Social Interactions

Another sociological perspective on turnout explores not so much the background of voters as their social interactions and the associated mechanisms of pressure, influence, and control. The Columbia school was the first to emphasize the importance of such contacts for enforcing the social norm of voting, especially in primary groups—the couple, family, friends—in which people talk and interact closely, face to face, on an intimate and informal base, in line with Gabriel Tarde's sociology. Overshadowed for a while by the Michigan school, as well as by the rational choice perspective, this sociological approach was revived in the 1970s (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1987; Zuckerman 2005). Turnout is more frequent in small tightly woven communities (rural areas) where social control is strong, where everybody knows who voted and who did not, where a few opinion leaders can trigger dozens of other voters in a "turnout cascade" (Fowler 2005). Conversely, it declines when the person is disconnected, socially isolated, as can be the case with the very old, widowers, divorced, foreigners not integrated in the community, etc.

The "resource model" and later on the "Civic Voluntarism Model" (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995: 271) saw participation as shaped by citizens' involvement in non-political institutions such as the workplace, voluntary organizations, churches, that were likely to mobilize them. Non-participation could have reflected, not only the fact that some people couldn't or didn't want to, but also that "nobody asked," that they were isolated from the recruitment networks through which citizens are mobilized to politics. The "mobilization theory" was further developed by Stephen J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen's (1993), arguing that the drop in voting turnout mainly resulted from a decline in mobilization activities by parties and social networks. Their argument echoed Robert Putnam's thesis about the disappearance of "social capital" defined as social networks connecting individuals, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them (Putnam 2000). The erosion of the civic norm of electoral participation would particularly reflect the decline of the large voluntary associations born at the turn of the twentieth century. Putnam's definition of social capital and its operationalization have aroused serious criticism (for an assessment of its methodological pitfalls see Van Deth 2003), and the very capacity of formal voluntary associations to breed civicness or just interest in politics and create a public sphere of debate have been questioned. Until now, a large body of research has been testing the impact of social capital on turnout, with contradictory results.

Rosenstone and Hansen's book started a burgeoning field of research on the micro foundations of turnout, reviving the pioneer field experiments of Harold Gosnell in Chicago. The experimental design allowed the comparison of groups of voters randomly selected, exposed to various types of social pressure, from a simple reminder of civic duty to more elaborated shaming stimuli, such as saying that the person's voting record would be exposed to her neighbors (Gerber and Green 2008; Green and Schwam-Baird 2016). It confirmed that social pressure increased voter turnout, and that the most effective means to bring him or her to the polls was fear of her neighbors' judgment, a finding supported and enriched by innumerable experiments since. However, as effective as it may be, social pressure from neighbors seldom occurs, citizens more willingly take cues from friends, family, and informal networks (Sinclair 2012; Abrams, Iversen, and Soskice 2011). Using a two-wave panel survey of the Canadian national elections, Blais, Galais, and Coulombe (2019) compared pressure by different actors (partner/relatives/friends) and in different ways, either telling the person explicitly that she should vote (injunctive norm, social control) or exercising an implicit pressure, by behaving properly (descriptive norm, in line with Tarde's "imitation law)." It appears that the most successful social pressure comes from within the household, more specifically from the partner/spouse, and that descriptive norms are far more powerful than injunctive norms. What matters is whether the partner votes, not whether she cares. Ethnographic observation conducted at the micro level reaches the same conclusions. Céline Braconnier and Jean-Yves Dormagen (2007) conducted a five-year survey in the "Cité des Cosmonautes," a housing project in the suburbs of Paris, in the "93" (department of Seine Saint Denis), part of the former "red belt' stronghold of the Communist Party. Now the party-mobilizing networks have disappeared, the most affluent inhabitants have fled, and non-voting is the norm. Mixing observation, informal talks, interviews, exit polls, and checking of the electoral lists, showed convincingly the utmost importance of the micro pressures exercised by the family. When it takes place, the act of voting is collective, the husband accompanies his wife to the polling station, the father reminds his children, sisters meet to go together, etc.

THE SOCIOLOGY OF PROTEST

The Normalization of Protest

The first studies on political participation focused on activities associated with party politics such as voting, attending meetings, giving money, and contacting elected representatives. They left aside less institutionalized channels such as wildcat strikes and street demonstrations, seen as disruptive and illegitimate in a democracy. In the mid-1960s, the waves of political protest sweeping through Western democracies forced attention and obliged reconsidering this exclusion (see Chapter 24). Barnes and Kaase (1979) were the first to study together conventional and "unconventional" or "unorthodox" political participation. In line with the theories of Inglehart, who was part of the team, they assumed that cultural change was the main driver of protest, especially among the younger cohorts born in the post-war context of peace and prosperity. The spread of post-materialist values, stressing autonomy and self-expression, would makes citizens less deferent to authority, more likely to challenge and bypass political elites. Their comparative "Political Action" survey asked about approval of and engagement in ten forms of direct action. In all countries, the same hierarchy of answers appeared, from massive approval of the softer means of action (petition, authorized demonstrations) to quasi unanimous rejections of the most radical (damage to property or people). With the exception of the violent modes, the items formed a cumulative scale measuring "protest potential" or propensity to protest. An average of 80 percent of respondents approved at least one of these means. Protest potential, as assumed, was higher among respondents more open to post-materialist values, namely, young, educated, well off and politicized, and those with a left-wing orientation. Moreover, far from being exclusive, conventional and unconventional forms of protest were complementary, extending citizens' political repertoire. Since this pioneer study, a host of surveys has confirmed the normalization of protest activities (Norris 1999; Van Aelst, and Walgrave 2001), especially among the younger cohorts, in sharp contrast with the decline of more institutionalized forms of participation (Dalton 2021). Surveys however tell us about the legitimacy of protest activities and the individual propensity to engage, not about actual behavior. Individual actions usually are embedded in collective actions and mobilizations that give them structure and meaning. Specific paradigms explaining such actions developed on each side of the Atlantic.

The Class Approach

SMs as "sustained, organized challenge to existing authorities in the name of a deprived, excluded or wronged population" (Tilly 1995: 144), appeared in Western Europe around the mid-nineteenth century, in connection with the development of industrial capitalism. The first study naming them as such goes back to the book of German sociologist Ludwig Von Stein in 1850 (*The History of the Social Movement in France, 1789-1850*). For him the term "social movement" refers to the efforts of emancipation of the working class, seen as the driving force of social change. Marx and Engels put class struggle at the heart of their analysis of capitalism (The Manifesto of the Communist Party in 1848 and Capital in 1867), defining social classes by their place in the production process, as historical collective actors existing "in" and "of" themselves, in a mode of production dominated by the struggle between capital and labor.

Compared to the working-class movement, those of the 1960s—ecology, gay rights, peace, women's movements—appeared as "new." The French sociologist Touraine was among the first to have analyzed them as such, in Marxist terms, but replaced the actor at the center of the perspective (1978), joined by his former student, Melucci (1980). "Sociological intervention," a new method based on the active implication of the researcher in the studied movement and confrontation of its activist with opponents and allies, helped him explore in succession the students' movement of 1968, the anti-nuke movement, the Polish union Solidarnosc, the Occitan movement, etc. He concluded that none of these movements could compare with the working class and the historical part it once played. Meanwhile the term "NSM" had been widely adopted. What authors as different as Habermas, Offe, Cohen, Kitschelt had in common was to see these movements as reflecting the transition from industrial to post-industrial society. Power was shifting from the control of material production to the control of knowledge and communication. Conflicts moved from the workplace to society and culture at large, multiplying "points of antagonism." The NSM were not putting forward economic grievances but post-materialist issues: quality of life, autonomy, identity. They mobilized new actors—students, women, immigrants, sexual minorities—transcending class borders.

From Breakdown to Solidarity Theories

The revolutionary upheavals that shook Europe from 1789 to the end of the nineteenth century brought attention to the eruptive, emotional, disorderly dimension of protest, stimulating competing paradigms at odds with the notion of organized class movements. In France, the theories of Gustave le Bon on the psychology of crowds are a good example. He saw crowds as a fusion of the individuals that compose them, held together by the laws of imitation, contagion, and the grip of demagogic leaders. In the US, the sociologists of the early Chicago school such as Park and Burgess, familiar with the writings of Le Bon but also Durkheim or Simmel, lay the foundations of what then became the "collective behavior" model. SMs were seen as a subtype among other collective behaviors such as crowds, mobs, riots, rumors, panics, resulting from socials strains and breakdowns temporarily interrupting social control and moral constraints (Blumer 1951; Smelser 1962; Turner and Killian 1987). In this perspective, isolated individuals were the most likely to take part in extremist movements (Kornhauser 1959). Other interpretations inspired by John Dollard's work on frustration/aggression mechanisms focused on political violence and revolutions, seen as resulting from relative or absolute deprivation. The "J curve" model of James Davies (1962) combined the intuition of Marx, for whom the proletariat would revolt when exploitation became intolerable, and of Tocqueville, for whom on the contrary revolutions occurred when the prince started to reform. Revolutions should be more likely when a period of prosperity is followed by sharp decline, the thwarted hopes creating an intolerable gap between higher expectancies and lower possibilities to fulfill them, while Ted Gurr (1970) explained the violence of the Black urban riots of the 1970s by the intensity of relative deprivation, stemming from the gap between what the actors think they deserve, and what they get. In a similar vein, Piven and Cloward (1977) studied "poor people's movements" that surge spontaneously in "moments of madness," forming outside of existing organizations from fear they would channel, pacify, or confiscate their revolt, eventually creating their own.

Solidarity theorists took the opposite view, arguing that the integration of individuals into community life, group membership, associative and organizational ties facilitated mobilization, especially "bloc-mobilization" (Tilly 1978). Anthony Oberschall (1973) drew attention to the social environment that facilitates the emergence of SM inside a given collectivity, mainly its degree of internal organization and its links with the outside. The ideal combination was strong associational ties and segmentation from the larger society. Hence, the struggle for freedom of the Black community was more successful in the South, with its dense network of churches and associations, in autonomy from the White community, than in the ghettos of the North where the population was divided and atomized.

The "Resource Mobilization" Model and Beyond

The "resource mobilization" model (McCarthy and Zald 1977) also developed in reaction against breakdown and relative deprivation theories, seen as incapable of explaining the SMs of the 1960s. Its inspiration came from Mancur Olson's analysis of collective action, based on the utilitarian paradigm. Rejecting both pluralist and Marxist theories, he argued that common interests are not enough to make people mobilize together. Individuals act rationally: they will avoid taking part in an action if a "free ride" is possible, unless incentives are provided. Hence, McCarthy and Zald asserted the rationality and the organized character of social movements. Movements last because there are organizations (SMOs) to structure them, with professional entrepreneurs at their head (SMEs), competing inside a same social movement industry (SMI), and drawing resources from their environment (members and supporters, money, networks, media, public opinion).

The model imposed itself as its economist orientations were gradually tuned down and amended. Charles Tilly added the necessary historical perspective. Analyzing four centuries of contentious politics in France and in Great Britain (Tilly 1986, 1995), he showed that at each epoch protesters mastered a limited range of forms of collective action, which he called their "repertoire of contention" by analogy with the repertoire of a musician or an actor, reflecting their social, cultural, and political surroundings. Peasants attacked millers and corn-dealers, burned down the lord's castle, pot-banged in front of a corrupt official's house. With the development of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century, the emergence of large factory strikes became workers' normal mode of protest. While peaceful, street demonstrations, "demonstrating" the force of number, appeared in the large capital cities, first London then Paris, where the political institutions of the country were centralized and the demonstrators more visible (Fillieule and Tartakowsky 2017). Other authors brought politics back in the picture, analyzing SMs as a "political process" (McAdam 1982), structured by the interactions between claim makers, power holders and contenders (Tilly 1978), affected by the political opportunities existing in its environment. The concept of "Political Opportunity Structure" (POS) will become central (Giugni 2009), gradually stretched to encompass the type of state (weak/strong, centralized/decentralized), the electoral rules, the party system, the administration, the strategy towards contenders, etc. The Swiss state, weak and decentralized, offering many access points to protesters and direct democracy procedures, functioned like a sponge that absorbed and moderated protest (Kriesi 2004). While on the contrary the French context, with its strong centralized state and its lack of direct democracy procedures between elections, favored strategies of exclusion and repression that encouraged confrontation and repeated episodes of violence.

A last touch was the integration of the cultural dimension. Reacting against the structuralist/materialist bias of the resource mobilization model Benford and Snow (2000) called for a cognitive turn, that would focus on the meaning of collective action. They identified it as the missing link to an understanding of why people mobilize. At the core, inspired by interactionist theories and particularly Erving Goffman's concept of interpretative schemes, was the notion of "collective action frames" and specifically "injustice frames" (Gamson 1992). Discontent and anger would not necessarily bring people to the streets. Important parts of SMs' activity was to shape grievances, identify the responsibilities, and mobilize for collective action. They were in competition with other movements to impose these frames (frame alignment) and their claims were more legitimate if they resonated with the dominant culture, if they benefited from the "Discursive Opportunity Structure" (Koopmans et al. 2005), symmetric to the "Political Opportunity Structure."

By the 1990s the amended "resource mobilization" paradigm was widely shared. The key notions of mobilizing organizations, political opportunities, framing processes, and repertoire of contention seemed to hold consensus on both sides of the Atlantic. European and American specialists of SMs met in workshops and published together.[4] Yet already the model was being questioned, its very success bringing a counter-reaction (for an assessment

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[4] See the book series "Social Movement, Protest and Contention" edited by Bert Klandermans, Ron Aminzade, David Meyer, and Verta Taylor at the University of Minnesota Press.

Van Stekelenburg, Roggeband, and Klandermans, 2013). In their *Dynamics of Contention,* McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly (2001) called for taking into account mechanisms and processes, and for extending the scope of protest beyond social movements to contentious episodes and all forms of protest, including the non-Western world. The harshest attacks came from a group of French scholars marking their distance from the North-American research (Accornero and Fillieule 2016). They targeted the reification of the political opportunity structure, seen as a pre-condition of success, forgetting that movements can create new opportunities. They rejected a state-centered approach, focused on large-scale protest events in the public space, giving too much importance to organizations and structures and to the political arena. They called for an extension of the boundaries of SMs, including politics from below and the everyday acts of resistance—jokes, derision, songs, described by James Scott as the weapons of the weak (Scott 1985 and 1990), as well as protest against other movements, and other institutions than the state (churches, courts, medical profession, etc.). They advocated an actor-centered and qualitative perspective, focused on the meaning individuals give to their actions, to their emotions, and affects. Similar critics came from Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta (2001; Jasper 1997), stressing the central part played by affects, emotions, passions, and the symbolic and aesthetic dimension of protest.

Inspired by the literature about the role of transnational actors competing with the nation state (Keohane and Nye 1971), another field of research questioned the internationalization of SMs in a globalized world. Would the emergence of transnational networks of contacts and conflicts engaged in protest activities and exchanging know-hows and skills change the nature of protest activities? Comparative surveys showed nevertheless that even the most internationalized activists remained anchored in their specific national contexts: they were "rooted cosmopolitans" (Tarrow 2005; Della Porta 2006).

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN TURBULENT TIMES

The twenty-first century is turbulent. Never since the 1960s were there so many worldwide mass protests, from the anti-austerity movements to the Arab Spring and the recent mobilizations about climate change, #Me Too, and Black Lives Matter. And if the declining trend of electoral participation overall persists, one has seen record turnout in the 2016 referendum on Brexit in the UK, in the 2019 European elections, in the 2019 parliamentary elections in Hong Kong and the 2020 parliamentary elections in South Korea. These changing patterns are boosting sociological research and bringing us to reconsider classical explanatory models.

The end of economic growth in the 1970s, the acceleration of economic and financial globalization in the 1990s, with its winners and its losers, marked "the return of social insecurity" (Castel 2000) in post-industrial democracies. In sharp contrast with the wage-earning society, where workers had stable jobs, guaranteed wages, and good social protection, the aftermath brought social disaffection, mass unemployment, dualization of the labor market, exploding income inequalities and new forms of poverty. The "Great Recession" of 2008 exacerbated these trends, with complex and nonexclusive consequences. The most expected, in line with the resource model is that crisis-driven economic hardship and insecurity encourage political disaffection and depress electoral participation, especially among the most disadvantaged (Solt 2010; Schäfer 2013; Armingeon and Schädel 2015; Mayer, 2018). In line with the "Schattschneider's hypothesis," this is a self-feeding process. As poor people vote less, they are less likely to be heard, and the issues that matter for them less taken into consideration, turning them further away from politics. A second hypothesis, in line with earlier models of social strains and breakdowns, would be that discontent boosts extremist protest votes. A burgeoning literature sees a causal link between the recession and the wave of electoral populism that is sweeping through Europe, both on the right and, more recently, on the left (Bermeo and Bartels 2014; Kriesi and Pappas 2015). A third path of action is protest (Ancelovici et al. 2016, Grasso and Giugni 2016), especially if people fear they will not be heard by institutional channels, as shown by the worldwide waves of anti-austerity mobilizations, more intense in the countries most hit by the crisis such as Greece (Karyotis 2018), Portugal, and Spain. Worthy of note is that many of these anti-austerity movements mobilize those at the bottom of society who feel forgotten and usually do not protest. The shock of the Great Recession has revived earlier models left aside in favor of the resource mobilization paradigm, in terms of social strains and discontent, starting with the work of Piven and Cloward (1977) on "poor people's movements."

Ten years ago, McAdam and Tarrow (2010) called for a de-compartmentalization of research on party politics and social movements: it is underway. Conventional and contentious politics, "ballots and barricades," are more than ever connected. The proximity of elections increases opportunities for social movements to make their claims heard. They can mobilize voters, pressure the government and political institutions, and put new issues on the agenda. In the US, the Tea Party movement had a decisive impact on the Republican wave in the 2010 mid-term elections (Karpowitz et al. 2011). Symmetrically a large grass movement, American Resistance, sprang up in reaction to Donald Trump's election, mobilizing millions in marches and protests, at the origin of the Blue Wave that washed over the U.S. Congress in 2018 (Fisher 2019). Meanwhile the borders between SMs and parties are blurring, the former may give birth to political parties such as *Podemos, Syriza,* or the *Movimento Cinque Stelle*, which have been appropriately called "movement parties," a new hybrid form of political organization (della Porta et al. 2017). Conversely, parties increasingly engage in protest activities (see the study in 30 European countries by Borbath and Hutter 2020).

Marked by the "new" social movements of the 1960s, the bulk of SM studies focused on left-wing movements. The present populist wave has drawn attention to far-right movements. The project FARPE for instance (Far-Right Protest in Europe after the Great Recession, coordinated by Froio, Castelli-Gattinara, and Pirro), based on protest events analysis, studies the opportunities offered by the economic context to far-right protest in 11 European countries where these parties have unequal vote shares. Moreover, hybrid structures are appearing such as Casa Pound Italia (Froio et al. 2020), a unique mix of party politics and street protest, ideology and pop culture, left-progressiveness and nativism, that makes fascism entertaining and attractive, way beyond the traditional extreme right circles.

The internationalization of protest has also helped with moving away from a Western-centered approach to political action. The 2010 Arab revolutions, in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, and beyond, provided the opportunity, coming as a surprise for most SM scholars. They were disseminating a priori in the least favorable context, in countries with strong states, authoritarian regimes, weak civil societies, and mobilizing the most deprived (Dupont and Passy, 2011; Bennani-Chraïbi and Fillieule, 2012). Research on non-democratic contexts in general is booming and questioning well-established paradigms such as Diana Fu's amazing book *Mobilizing Without the Masses* (2018), based on 18 months' participant ethnography of migrant workers in China. She shows how the grassroots NGOs that defend them, far from inciting them to demonstrate or go on strike, coach them to act individually or in small groups. Providing moral support and giving them a sense of belonging, they organize an invisible but effective resistance, escaping state detection and repression.

In sharp contrast with the pacification of police/population relations in the 1990s and the slow civilizing process of Western societies described by Norbert Elias, violence has marked recent large-scale demonstrations, from the anti-global protests of the 1990s to the recent Yellow Vest actions in France and Black Lives Matter demonstrations in the US. A sociological perspective brings attention to the interactions between demonstrators, the police and the media (Sommier 2021; Sommier et al. 2019; Jobard and Fillieule 2020). Since the apparition of the Black Blocks twenty years ago, the profile of activists has changed, with the radicalization of young people not channeled by unions and parties. However, on the side of the police also, there is a process of brutalization, linked to de-professionalization, deficient supervision, over-mediatization and judiciarization of the relations with the public.

More and more interactions take place via the social media, and the relationship between online and offline participation has proven crucial (Oser et al. 2013). Social media does not create social movements ex nihilo, nor replace physical involvement. However, it can facilitate the diffusion of frames, the instantaneous connection between participants, and the enrolling of supporters. At the beginning of the French Yellow Vest movement, there was a petition launched by Priscillia Ludosky in May 2018 on Facebook condemning the rise of fuel prices due to Macron's Carbon tax. It carried the resentment of inhabitants of small towns who have to take their car every day to go to work. In a couple of weeks, it went viral and drew over a million followers. It was the prelude of the large-scale anti-Macron movement that would take to the streets in November, with giant demonstrations and roundabout occupations. A host of research projects is presently studying Yellow Vest activists and their supporters online and offline.[5]

The future of political participation is conditioned by generational turnover and the evolution of gender roles (see Chapter 51). Socialization in the formative years is crucial and age–period–cohort (APC) models allow identifying more precisely generational effects (Grasso et al. 2019; Grasso 2016). The baby boomers coming to age in the 1960s and 1970s brought up in a period of peace and prosperity were the civic generation, with an extended repertoire of action combining conventional party politics and protest activities. The following cohorts coming of age in the 1980s and the 1990s appear less inclined to go to the polls and more likely to take part in protest activities such as demonstrations, petitions, or boycotts, yet less often than the baby boomers. Therefore, in the long run, overall participation should gradually decline if these trends continue. However, as noted in the conclusion of Grasso's book (2016) studying ten Western democracies from the 1970s to the eve of the Great Recession: "Only time will tell if the current context of deepening global inequality in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis will lead to the emergence of a new 'protest generation.'" Given the many recent concerns, "a new generation of activists engaging politically to overcome these contemporary challenges may soon re-emerge" (Grasso 2014). Indeed, youth has appeared at the forefront of protest, in anti-austerity movements, climate strikes or pro-democracy rebellions (Hong Kong, Belarus, Algeria, Sudan, Myanmar). Repoliticization on these issues could counterbalance the declining trend of political participation.

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[5] For a summary of early research on the YV movement: http://ses.ens-lyon.fr/actualites/rapports-etudes-et-4-pages/les-sciences-sociales-et-le-mouvement-des-gilets-jaunes. Also a Facebook survey at Sciences Po Genoble: (https://www.pacte-grenoble.fr/programmes/grande-enquete-sur-le-mouvement-des-gilets-jaunes), and at Sciences Po Paris, the project YellowPol/The Yellow Vests Movement Impact on the 2019 European elections: online/offline polarization, coordinated by Caterina Froio and myself: (https://www.sciencespo.fr/centre-etudes-europeennes/en/node/27012), combining an online survey to detect the supporters and analysis of the party Facebook pages and Twitter handles in association with the MediaLab of Sciences Po.

As for the closing of the gender gap, optimistically, Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris (2003) saw political engagement of women as a rising and inevitable tide resulting from the spread of post materialist values, secularization, and the worldwide profound changes in sex and gender roles, traditional societies catching up slowly with the modern Western ones. Reality is more complex, there is no linear trend, and even in decidedly post-materialist societies, gender gaps have not completely disappeared for some modes of actions (for a robust and comparative assessment with age–period–cohorts models, see Durovic 2020). Although it is common knowledge that, for instance, women nowadays go to the polls as often as men, and in many countries more, recent research shows it is the case in national elections, but not in second-order ones. In European Parliament Elections, the gap is still there, in two-thirds of the countries concerned in all EP elections since 2019 (Dassonneville and Kostelka 2020; on the French case, see Amengay, Durovic, and Mayer 2017). The authors see gender differences in political interest as the main reason for the gap. These gender differences are context dependent, associated with cultural norms and stereotypes going back to early socialization, captured through a clever indicator—differences in boys' and girls' maths scores in school. In the countries where girls are as good in maths, the gender gap disappears. It is strong when they lag behind boys. The same stereotypes about gender roles affect politics and mathematics. There lies the main obstacle on the road to political equality.

CONCLUSION

Sociology identifies processes and mechanisms, relations of cooperation or conflict, exclusion and integration, domination and subordination, that make political participation. It gives flesh and voice to the actors. It shows that even in the context of growing individualization, group belonging and group identities, social positions and social interactions matter. It highlights the complexity of shifting political participation patterns. Overall, socially privileged citizens, especially the more educated, participate more often than the disadvantaged do. While non-institutionalized forms of participation reduce or even reverse gender and age gaps, the educational divide persists and sometimes increases. Yet there is no linear trend. In the US, polarized between the pro and anti-Trump, the highest record of turnout in a presidential election since a century was broken. The Arab Springs, the anti-austerity protests in Europe, the Yellow Vests' revolt in France, show there are moments where the most deprived take to the streets and voice their claims. Paradigms and theories constantly have to adapt to a changing environment.

Of the many challenges sociology of political participation should face in the near future, one is "genopolitics," revitalizing the old nature/culture debate. Some research claims there is such a thing as a gene of political participation (Fowler and Dawes 2013; Klemmensen et al. 2012). Recent large-scale surveys in Europe, based on the comparison of siblings, attempt to evaluate the relation between genetic and environmental factors. For instance, the CONPOL project in Sweden, focused on the social logic of political engagement, comparing adopted and non-adopted children, was designed to measure the relative importance of genetic and social effects on political participation. Preliminary findings suggest that the impacts of "pre-birth" and "post-birth" factors are approximately equal in size.[6]

Another challenge is Artificial Intelligence and the coexistence with machines and robots. There are worries about how campaigns based on data analytics could increase the possibility to manipulate voters, how computer-generated "people" could drown out human discussions on the internet, and how they can facilitate the spread of fake news as they did in the last presidential campaign. However, AI can also "empower" citizens by giving them better access to information (for an assessment of positive and negative impact, see Savaget et al. 2019). The same goes with "big data" in general (see Chapter 18). All the traces left today by individuals on internet, on their cellphones, on their connected objects, bring a wealth of data to researchers, but raise considerable ethical and epistemological challenges (Langlois, Redden and Elmer 2015).

Last, the coronavirus crisis is limiting basic social and political rights, increasing economic insecurity, and exacerbating existing social inequalities (class, gender, education, ethnicity), which should increase political participation inequalities (for an overview of Covid-19's varied impacts, see Grasso et al. 2021). This is the biggest challenge in the long run.

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CHAPTER 4

PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

LAUREN E. DUNCAN

OUTLINING what psychology as a field has to contribute to the understanding of political participation is a daunting task. Psychology is a wide-ranging field and political behavior can be described in a similarly broad way. However, this chapter will attempt to give an overview of psychological approaches to understanding political behavior, with an emphasis on the current dominant models used by researchers and a discussion of what is left out.

First, how does psychology define political participation? Van Deth (2016) argued that contemporary forms of political behavior have expanded to include modes of action that are not included in traditional definitions of political participation. Therefore, what does and does not constitute political behavior is no longer as clear as it was in the past. Instead of relying on a fixed definition of political participation, he asks us to use a series of decision rules to determine whether any one particular behavior constitutes political participation or not. We can use these decision rules to define political participation in a broad way, as voluntary actions undertaken by nonprofessionals to (1) affect government/state/politics, (2) resolve collective or community problems that have political implications, or (3) express political aims or intentions.

In psychology, research on political participation has focused on three principal domains: (1) voting and other types of conventional political participation, (2) volunteering, and (3) collective protest behavior. Research in each of these fields developed independently and has identified its own series of correlates and predictors. However, by considering each of these types of political participation in the same chapter, we are able to identify the variables that are both common and unique to each tradition and recognize new potential research directions in each domain.

Figure 4.1 organizes each of the types of political participation researched in psychology according to two characteristics: (1) the focus of the intended impact of the political behavior, and (2) the timeframe targeted by the political behavior to achieve results.

First, political participation can focus on affecting either individual lives or social structures. Political behaviors that affect individual lives usually do not lead to structural change, and political behaviors that affect structural factors do not tend to translate to individual lives immediately. Second, the timeframe of the proposed actions to achieve results can be split into urgent, immediate actions, and those that take a longer amount of time to achieve. Although there may be overlap between categories for any given political behavior, for simplicity's sake the two characteristics are examined together in the 2 x 2 table depicted in Figure 4.1. Thus, we can classify volunteering as focusing on trying to make immediate impacts on individuals (e.g., volunteering in a Food Bank). Careers that focus on affecting individual lives (e.g., teaching, social work) can be classified as making longer-term impacts on individuals. In neither of these two cases are structural factors a focus of the behavior, so perhaps they should not be classified as political behaviors. However, it is possible to undertake any of these behaviors with an explicitly political aim, thus fulfilling the third part of the definition of political participation described at the beginning of the chapter. Protest behavior can be classified as focusing on challenging social structures in an urgent manner, often in response to developing political situations (e.g., Black Lives Matter). Voting is the quintessential political behavior that focuses on making long-term structural changes. In addition, some careers focus on making structural changes (e.g., working for some, but not all, non-governmental organizations).

In conjunction with Figure 4.1, the psychological literature on correlates of each of these types of political participation is organized using the framework depicted in Figure 4.2.

The figure is purposefully very general and flexible, simply positing that psychological factors mediate, or provide a psychological explanation for, the relationship between individual difference variables and political participation. Thus, this framework should be able

		Focus of Intended Impact	
		Individual lives	**Social Structures**
Timeframe	**Immediate**	Volunteering	Protest
	Longer term	Careers	Voting

FIGURE 4.1 Types of Political Participation by Focus of Intended Impact and Timeframe

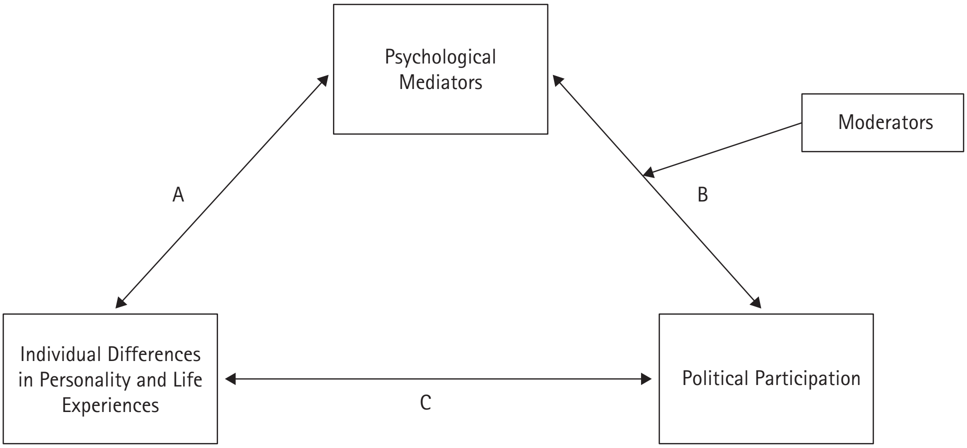

FIGURE 4.2 Organizing Framework for Motivation for Political Participation

to accommodate the existing research on all three types of political participation. Duncan (1999, 2012, 2018) first used a version of this framework to understand women's motivation for participation in women's rights activism, finding that a politicized gender identity mediated the relationships between various personality and life experience variables and women's rights activism. Figure 4.2 is similar to the Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA, van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears 2008), which is frequently used to understand the social psychology of protest behavior. However, the current model expands SIMCA to integrate personality characteristics and life experience variables into the framework.

The first box, on the lower left, is labeled "Individual differences in personality and life experiences." These variables comprise all the ways in which individuals differ from one another, and the research that focuses on Path C, linking individual difference variables with political participation, has largely come from research in personality psychology (see Duncan, 2012, 2018 for a review). The middle box, labeled "Psychological mediators," provides the psychological motivation for political behavior. In other words, this box represents the psychological processes that help us understand how and why individual difference variables might be related to political participation (Paths A and B). Most research on psychological mediators has come from the social psychological literature and has focused on group consciousness or politicized collective identities (Gurin 1985; Gurin, Miller, and Gurin 1980; van Zomeren et al. 2008). The third box on the lower right is labeled "Political participation" and represents the dependent variables in this research. In this chapter, it consists of voting and other types of conventional political participation, volunteering, and collective protest behavior. There is also a box labeled "Moderators" that recognizes that even when people are motivated to participate politically, there are often factors that either facilitate or hinder the translation of this motivation into action. This framework is useful because it brings together the vast literatures in two subfields of psychology, personality psychology and social psychology, which historically have not drawn on each other in their quest to understand political participation (see Duncan 2012, 2018 for a full treatment of this integration.) In addition, the possibility of reciprocal effects is recognized with the double-headed arrows, although most psychological research has not examined these reverse paths (though see Agronick and Duncan 1998 for an examination of the effects of participating in the Women's Movement on adult personality).

The psychological literatures on each of these three types of political participation are reviewed in turn in the following sections, and the variables considered in each literature are organized according to the framework depicted in Figure 4.2. By considering all three types of political participation in the same model, it should be apparent where there are gaps in our understanding of the psychological motivation for each type of behavior.

Voting and Conventional Political Participation

In the psychological literature, political participation is a rather nonspecific general term, encompassing political actions ranging from conventional party-based acts to unconventional political protests. Many of the acts described under the general label "political participation" require a greater commitment of time and energy than voting, such as, for example, attending political meetings, working for political candidates, writing a letter, or contacting a public official. Nevertheless, "political participation" tends to reflect conventional acts in support of electoral politics (e.g., working for a political candidate) or working within the existing governing framework (e.g., contacting a public official), and so is considered alongside voting, as a more labor-intensive form of conventional political participation.

Psychological research has focused almost exclusively on the contribution of personality traits to political participation, voting intentions, and voting behavior (Path C in Figure 4.3).

In particular, extensive research in Western European and American contexts has investigated the correlations of the Big 5 personality characteristics (McCrae and Costa 1990) with political participation, voting intentions, and voting behavior. The Big 5 is an omnibus framework that organizes an extensive list of personality characteristics with five latent variables, first developed through exploratory factor analysis. The Big 5 consists of Openness to Experience (e.g., imagination, curiosity, creativity), Conscientiousness (e.g., organization, thoroughness, reliability), Extraversion (e.g., talkativeness, assertiveness, activity level), Agreeableness (e.g., kindness, trust, warmth) and Neuroticism (e.g., nervousness, moodiness, temperamentality (Goldberg 1993).

Figure 4.3 fills in the boxes in the framework with the variables researched in studies of the psychology of conventional political participation. Following Path C, researchers have empirically documented relationships between Openness to Experience and Extraversion and higher levels of all kinds of conventional political participation in the US and Europe (Gerber et al. 2011; Quintelier and Theocharis 2013): being registered as a member of a political association (Foschi and Lauriola 2014); contacting a public official, working on a

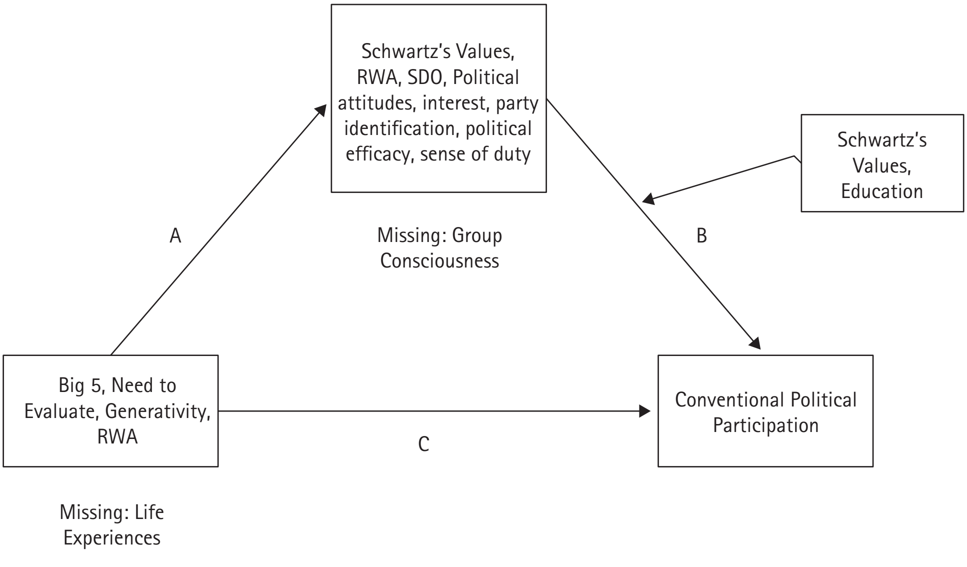
Schwartz's Values, RWA, SDO, Political attitudes, interest, party identification, political efficacy, sense of duty
Schwartz's Values, Education
A
Missing: Group Consciousness
B
Big 5, Need to Evaluate, Generativity, RWA
Conventional Political Participation
C
Missing: Life Experiences

FIGURE 4.3 Personality and Life Experiences, Psychological Mediators, and Conventional Political Participation

political campaign, attending campaign rallies, speaking at political meetings, and signing petitions (Mondak 2010; Mondak and Halperin 2008). These relationships also apply to activism conducted exclusively on the internet: by signing online petitions, disseminating political information, and sending an email to a politician, and specifically activism on Facebook through support for social–political groups, and by posting links to websites, posting political materials or opinions, and "liking" political parties or candidates on Facebook (Quintelier and Theocharis 2013).

Numerous studies of voting intentions and voting behavior in Europe, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States have consistently found a positive correlation between support for liberal political parties and high Openness to Experience and Agreeableness. These same studies have consistently found relationships between support for conservative political parties and high Conscientiousness and Extraversion (Aichholzer, Danner, and Rammstedt 2018; Blankenship et al. 2018; Caprara, Barbaranelli, and Zimbardo 1999; Caprara et al. 2010; Caprara et al. 2006; Chirumbolo and Leone 2010; Duckitt and Sibley 2016; Gerber et al. 2011; Schoen and Schumann 2007; Vecchione et al. 2011). The results are similar for voting intentions in the US and Great Britain (Barbaranelli et al. 2007; Furnham and Cheng 2019; Mondak 2010). Results for Neuroticism tend to be equivocal or non-existent (Barbaranelli et al. 2007; Obschonka et al. 2018; Osborne and Sibley 2012; Schoen and Steinbrecher 2013a). Obschonka et al. (2018), in their study of the Brexit vote in Great Britain and the 2016 US presidential election, argued that Neuroticism has a "sleeper" effect, meaning that it becomes more relevant in affecting votes when populist leaders emerge whose messages emphasize fear, lost pride, and loss aversion (perhaps indicating the moderating effect of candidate type).

Although establishing direct relationships between Big 5 personality traits and conventional political participation is an important first step (Path C in Figure 4.3), bivariate relationships do not tell us why something like Openness to Experience or Agreeableness would be related to voting for leftist political parties. Following this original research, then, scholars have focused on variables that mediate and moderate the relationships between Big 5 traits and voting behavior (Paths A and B). Mediators explain the reason why an independent and dependent variable are related, whereas moderators tell us why a relationship exists for some groups and not others. For example, Caprara and colleagues (Caprara et al., 2010; Caprara et al. 2006; Caprara, Vecchione, and Schwartz 2009) examined the mediating and moderating role of values in samples of Italian voters in parliamentary elections. They found that center-left voters scored higher than center-right voters on Schwartz's (1994) basic human values of universalism, benevolence, and self-direction and lower in security, power, achievement, conformity, and tradition. Further, they found that security values mediated the relationship between voting for center-right parties and high Conscientiousness and low Openness, and universalism values mediated the relationship between voting for center-left parties and Openness and Agreeableness. Researchers have also found that the relationship between Openness and voting is moderated by education (so that highly educated voters in New Zealand and the US scoring high in Openness were less likely to vote for the conservative party; Osborne and Sibley 2012). Other researchers have found that both right-wing authoritarianism (RWA)[1] and social dominance orientation

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[1] Some sample items from the Right Wing Authoritarianism Scale (Altemeyer 1996) are: "Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical new

(SDO)[2] mediate the relationships between Big 5 traits and voting preferences in New Zealand (Duckitt and Sibley 2016) and the United States (Blankenship et al. 2018). Specifically, Conscientiousness and low Openness were positively related to RWA, which was related to voting for conservative political parties. Low Openness and low Agreeableness were related to SDO, which was related to voting for conservative political parties.

Finally, following Paths A and B, researchers have found that political attitudes and interest, party identification and identification with larger political entities, political efficacy, and a sense of duty mediated the relationships between Big 5 traits and voting in Germany and Spain, without specifying the direction of the vote (Gallego and Oberski 2012; Schoen and Steinbrecher 2013a). Specifically, in a Spanish sample, political interest, efficacy, and identification with Europe all mediated the relationship between Openness and voting; efficacy mediated the relationship between Extraversion and voting; and sense of duty mediated the relationship between Conscientiousness and voting (Gallego and Oberski 2012). In a German sample, party identification and political efficacy mediated the relationships between voting and Agreeableness and (negatively) Neuroticism. Sense of duty also mediated the relationship between Agreeableness and voting (Schoen and Steinbrecher 2013a). In addition, self-efficacy mediated the relationship between Openness and Extraversion and political participation (Vecchione and Caprara 2009).

There are very few studies that empirically examine the correlation of personality characteristics other than the Big 5 with conventional political participation. However, using American National Election Studies data from 1998 and 2000, Bizer et al. (2004) found that Need to Evaluate,[3] a person's tendency to create and hold attitudes, was positively related to electoral activism (i.e., encouraging others to vote, attending a political rally, wearing a political button, working for a political candidate) and voting intentions and voting behavior, without examining mediators. In addition, Peterson et al. (1997) found that generativity,[4] or the desire to contribute to future generations, was positively related to several different types of conventional political participation, whereas RWA was negatively related to participation. Finally, in one suggestive study conducted using life-satisfaction indicators aggregated by US county, researchers found that counties with higher aggregate levels of unhappiness (operationalized with various measures of life evaluation, positive and negative affect, and purpose) were more likely to vote for Trump in 2016 than counties with lower aggregate unhappiness indicators (Ward et al. 2020). Although results of county-level aggregates cannot definitively be used to explain individual behavior, the results are intriguing.

The summary of the research on the psychology of voting and conventional political participation depicted in Figure 4.3 makes it evident that there is inconsistency in how certain individual difference variables are conceptualized; some researchers consider them

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ways and sinfulness that are ruining us" and "Our country *needs* free thinkers who will have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people" (reverse scored).

[2] Some sample items from the Social Dominance Orientation scale (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle 1994) are: "Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups" and "No one group should dominate in society" (reverse scored).

[3] Some sample items from the Need to Evaluate Scale (Jarvis and Petty 1996) are: "I form opinions about everything" and "I prefer to avoid taking extreme positions" (reverse scored).

[4] Some sample items from the Loyola Generativity Scale (McAdams and de St. Aubin 1992) are: "I have made and created things that have had an impact on other people" and "I do not feel that other people need me" (reverse scored).

to be personality and life experience variables, and others consider them to be psychological mediators. Right wing authoritarianism is a variable that has been considered by some researchers to be a personality characteristic, meaning that it is relatively stable over time and across situations and varies in a fairly normally distributed way in a population (Altemeyer 1996). Other researchers treat RWA as a political variable that acts as a psychological mediator of personality characteristics (Duckitt 2001). Evidence from the Minnesota Twin Study supports the conceptualization of RWA as a personality variable, although, like most personality characteristics, contextual variables can affect its expression (Ludeke and Krueger 2013). The framework shown in Figure 4.3 makes it clear that any variable considered to be a mediator between personality and life experiences and conventional political participation should provide a psychological motivation for this political behavior. Some of the existing research positing individual difference variables as mediators does not fit this criterion. This inconsistency is an area that could benefit from future research.

In addition, two other sets of variables are not evident in this literature. First, it appears that there is very little research on the relationship of life experience variables with voting and conventional political participation in psychology. One exception is education, which is included as a potential moderator in Figure 4.3. Other life experience variables have been studied exhaustively in the political science literature, such as, for example, race, gender, education, income, and age (see Chapters 32–35, this volume). However, the psychological meaning of these variables, or determining which variables mediate their relationships with voting and other conventional political participation, has not been studied much. Second, group consciousness, or a politicized collective identity, is not represented in the literature on the psychological correlates of voting and other types of conventional political participation, though it is a key aspect of psychological models of motivation for collective protest behavior. However, voting is the quintessential act of an engaged citizen, therefore it is probable that voting and conventional political participation are related to an identity as a citizen that values political participation at its core. In fact, research shows that a sense of duty is related to voting behaviors (Schoen and Steinbrecher 2013a). Future research could investigate the possibility that some sort of politicized identity (perhaps as a citizen) acts as a psychological mediator of the relationships between personality characteristics and life experiences and conventional political participation. In addition, if a politicized collective identity was implicated in voting behavior, it might be interesting to consider the variables currently considered mediators of the relationship between personality and political participation as individual difference variables themselves (e.g., Schwartz's values, political interest, etc.).

Civic Participation and Volunteering

Civic engagement, which is defined as participation in cultural, religious, recreational, and social groups (Luengo Kanacri, Rosa, and Di Giunta 2012) is often posited as a precursor to political participation. However, most non-politically oriented civic engagement does not meet van Deth's (2016) criteria for political participation, and will not be considered in depth in this chapter. However, volunteering, which is often apolitical, is addressed, because sometimes volunteering is explicitly political. It is also considered here because

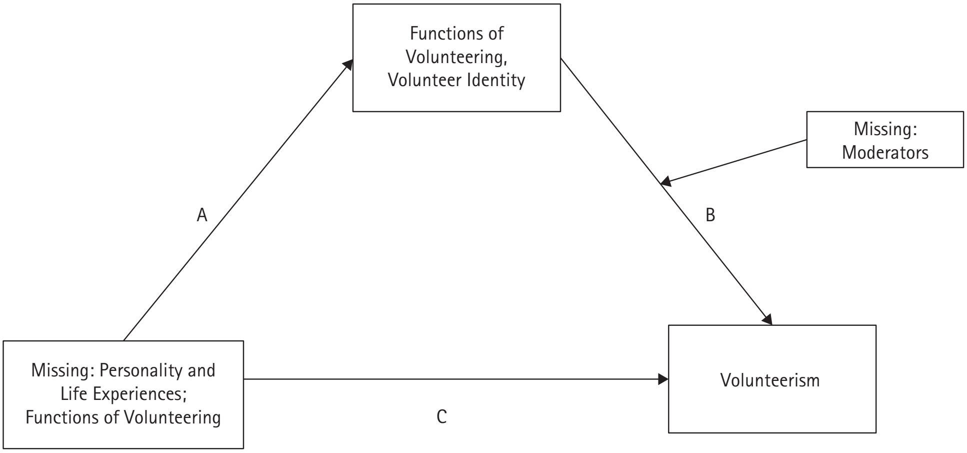
Functions of Volunteering, Volunteer Identity
Missing: Moderators
A
B
Missing: Personality and Life Experiences; Functions of Volunteering
Volunteerism
C

FIGURE 4.4 Personality and Life Experiences, Psychological Mediators, and Volunteering

motivation for volunteering is well theorized in a way that can be useful to understand political participation.

Volunteering is defined as freely chosen, non-remunerated actions taken by individuals aimed at improving the well-being of another person or persons, at no cost to them. It often entails a sustained commitment over time, though not always, and typically occurs under the aegis of an organization (Cicognani and Zani 2015; Penner 2002; Snyder 1993). Many volunteer activities are not explicitly political. Duncan (2012, 2018) argued that to be considered politically motivated, volunteering must challenge traditional power structures. For example, a person concerned with the negative effects of poverty may volunteer as a Big Brother or Big Sister (a volunteer position in which an adult acts as a mentor to a child or teenager) in order to help a child affected by poverty. However, this volunteering does not challenge the underlying economic and political systems which might lead to poverty, and so it is not explicitly political. This is a key distinction between volunteering and activism. Of course, volunteering can expose individuals to systemic analyses of power systems which then might lead to political participation (Duncan 2012, 2018). Some volunteering is, of course, explicitly political. For example, during elections, many people volunteer to staff phone banks, knock on doors, or hold signs in order to elect a political candidate. In any case, the literature on the psychological correlates of volunteering can be used to expand our thinking about the psychological correlates of political behavior, and is reviewed next.

The Volunteer Process Model (Clary et al. 1998; Omoto and Snyder 1995; Snyder 1993) identified six functions that volunteering might serve for individuals and thus might motivate volunteer behavior (Path B in Figure 4.4): value expression, development of new understanding, opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for career development and advancement, protection from negative emotions, and personal development and self-esteem enhancement.[5]

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[5] Sample items from the six subscales of the Volunteer Functions Inventory (Clary et al. 1998) are: Value expression: "I feel it is important to help others," Development of new understanding: "I can learn how to deal with a variety of people"; Opportunities for social interaction: "My friends

The values, understanding, and personal development motives have been linked to volunteer satisfaction (Maki, Dwyer, and Snyder 2015; Omoto and Snyder 1995), and volunteer persistence is related to the values motivation (Penner and Finkelstein 1998; Stukas, Snyder, and Clary 2016). In addition, the career advancement motive is found at higher levels in nonvolunteers compared to volunteers (Clary, Snyder, and Stukas 1996) and is negatively related to possessing a volunteer identity (Finkelstein, Penner, and Brannick 2005). Interestingly, the match between individual motivation and opportunities offered by the volunteer activity to satisfy that motivation has been found to be related to volunteer satisfaction and future volunteer intentions; this is especially important when the volunteer context is loosely structured (Clary et al. 1998; Snyder and Omoto 2001; Stukas et al 2009). Other researchers have focused on the development of a volunteer identity which is essential to maintaining a sustained commitment to the volunteer activity (Callero, Howard, and Piliavin 1987; Cocognani and Zani 2015; Grube and Piliavin 2000).

Researchers in community psychology have examined correlates of volunteer participation and also its impact on individuals, groups, and communities, which provides insight into how volunteering might be related to political participation. Focusing on the organizational level, Cicognani and Zani (2015) argued that there are at least two distinct arenas in which grassroots associations mobilize individual participation: (1) locality development, or the establishment of social networks and communities of a group of people affected by a particular issue, and (2) social action, or advocacy for the rights of that group. The second function is clearly political. However, it cannot exist without the development of social networks consisting of both volunteers and the people being served. In fact, many, if not most, contemporary volunteer organizations prioritize the training and empowerment of members of the served community to serve as leaders and advocates for their own group.

In this way, a common social identity can be developed and/or politicized, both among volunteers (as allies) and the served population (around a social identity). This locality development, in other words, can serve as a site of consciousness-raising and empowerment, which then facilitates challenges to the existing power structure through social action (Duncan forthcoming). Thus the community participation research dovetails nicely with the models of motivation for participation in collective action detailed by personality and social psychologists (Duncan 1999, 2012, 2018; van Zomeren et al. 2008) by highlighting the importance of social identities in sustaining volunteering.

The model depicted in Figure 4.4 organizes this research visually into the framework presented earlier, which makes several points clear. First, it would be useful to document the associations between individual differences in personality and life experiences and motivations for volunteering (Path A). That is, are certain personality characteristics more related to the development of particular motives for volunteering? Second, how exactly are the motives for volunteering incorporated into a volunteer identity? Third, what are the variables that moderate the relationship between motives for volunteering, volunteer identities, and volunteer behavior? That is, what are the factors that allow people, once they have developed a volunteer identity, to translate that identity into action? What are the variables that impede this translation into action? How are these variables similar to or

volunteer"; Opportunities for career development and advancement: "Volunteering experience will look good on my resume"; Protection from negative emotions: "By volunteering, I feel less lonely"; Personal development and self-esteem enhancement: "Volunteering makes me feel needed."

different from those that support or impede the translation of citizen identity into conventional participation, and/or group consciousness into protest behavior?

In addition, it might be useful to consider the functions of volunteering motives as individual difference variables rather than mediators and look at how they are related to the development of a politicized group identity, as a volunteer, an ally, or around a particular social identity. There is already work in the community psychology literature emphasizing the importance of the development of a volunteer identity to persistence as a volunteer (Grube and Piliavin 2000; Penner 2002). Examining which individual difference variables are related to the development of a volunteer identity could help round out the picture.

In addition, treating the functions of volunteering as individual difference variables rather than mediators could be especially useful when trying to understand how non-political volunteer activities might be related to the development of a structural analysis of the political system, which might then lead to other types of political participation, including collective protest behavior. For example, in many colleges and universities, it is possible to take a Community-Based Learning class which pairs volunteer work with conventional classwork; in this example, volunteering as a Big Brother/Big Sister (non-political volunteering) is paired with coursework on structural factors related to poverty and educational inequities. A college student taking this class might learn how structural inequities play out in the life of their mentee, thus politicizing their volunteer or ally identity, and leading them to participate in demonstrations for increased minimum wage. In this way, non-political volunteering may lead to group consciousness (Path A), which can then lead to political activism (Path B).

Collective Protest Behavior

The psychology of collective protest behavior has been extensively researched and theorized by personality and social psychologists. The dominant models resemble aspects of the framework depicted in Figure 4.5; however, social psychological models focus more on the middle box and Path B, whereas personality research focuses more on the left-hand box and Path C.

Only recently have researchers been interested in integrating these models and exploring how individual differences in personality and life experiences might be related to psychological motivators of protest behavior (Paths A and B). Duncan (1999, 2012, 2018) proposed a mediational model (a simplified version is presented in Figure 4.5) that explicitly integrated the research in personality psychology on individual difference variables and activism with the research in social psychology on politicized social identities and activism. Figure 4.5 visually depicts a summary table of personality and life experience variables that have been found to be related to politicized collective identities and/or protest behavior in the personality and social psychology literature (Duncan 2012, 2018).

Research in social psychology showed that group consciousness, or a politicized collective identity, motivates much political activism, particularly activism undertaken by members of lower status groups in society. Extensive research shows that there are three key components to group consciousness: (1) perceived injustice (van Zomeren et al. 2008), variously called power discontent and rejection of legitimacy (Gurin 1985; Gurin et al. 1980) or relative deprivation (Crosby 1976); (2) identity (van Zomeren et al. 2008),

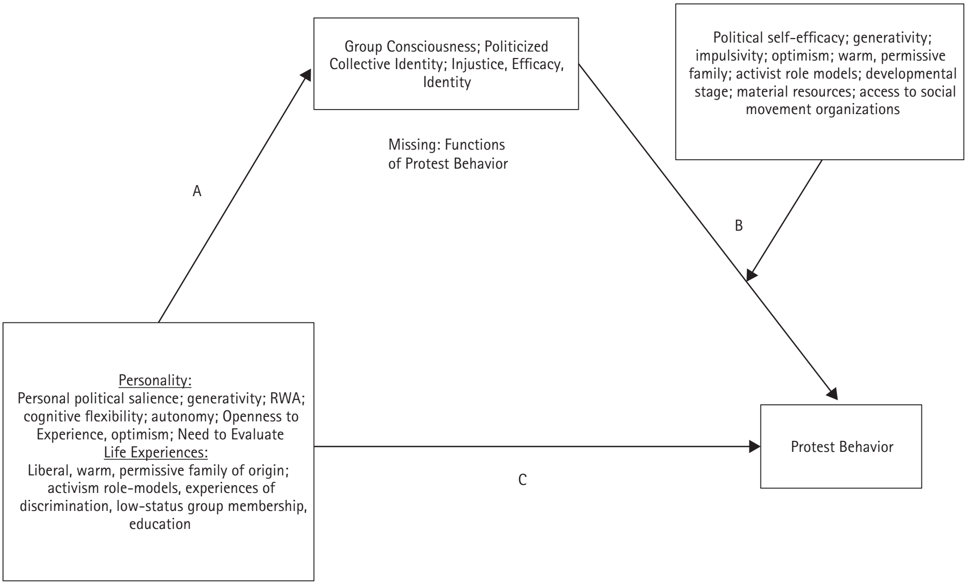
Group Consciousness; Politicized Collective Identity; Injustice, Efficacy, Identity
Political self-efficacy; generativity; impulsivity; optimism; warm, permissive family; activist role models; developmental stage; material resources; access to social movement organizations
Missing: Functions of Protest Behavior
A
B
Personality:
Personal political salience; generativity; RWA; cognitive flexibility; autonomy; Openness to Experience, optimism; Need to Evaluate
Life Experiences:
Liberal, warm, permissive family of origin; activism role-models, experiences of discrimination, low-status group membership, education
Protest Behavior
C

FIGURE 4.5 Personality and Life Experiences, Psychological Mediators, and Protest Behavior

Source: Adapted from Duncan, Lauren E. 2018. "The Psychology of Collective Action." In *The Oxford Handbook of Personality and Social Psychology*, by Lauren E. Duncan, edited by Kay Deaux and Mark Snyder, 2nd ed., 884–908. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190224837.013.36.

or a sense of common fate (Gurin et al. 1980); and (3) efficacy (van Zomeren et al. 2008) or collective orientation (Gurin et al. 1980). Early research on these variables using 1972 American National Election Studies data found that African Americans scored higher on common fate than Caucasians; and that African Americans and working-class people scored higher on rejection of legitimacy and collective orientation than Caucasians and middle-class people respectively. Interestingly, gender consciousness was low among Caucasian women (Gurin et al. 1980). More recently, an extensive meta-analysis showed that in the SIMCA model, identity was related to collective action, and that perceived injustice and perceived efficacy mediated the relationship between identity and collective action (van Zomeren et al. 2008).

To summarize the personality literature, individual differences in characteristics related to openness and flexibility of thought and action (e.g., low RWA, cognitive flexibility, Openness to Experience, Need to Evaluate) tended to be related to the development of group consciousness and higher levels of activist behavior (Bizer et al. 2004; Curtin, Stewart, and Duncan 2010; Saeri, Iyer, and Louis 2015). Variables related to a concern with the welfare of others beyond oneself and one's immediate family (e.g., personal political salience,[6] generativity) were also related to higher levels of group consciousness and activism (Cole and Stewart 1996; Duncan 1999). It is clear that certain life experiences were also related to the development of group consciousness and participation in protest behavior. Specifically, growing up in warm, liberal, permissive homes where discipline per se was not emphasized; being exposed to activist role models; obtaining higher levels of education; and experiencing first-hand discrimination based on a group identity are factors that were related to higher levels of group consciousness and activism (Block, Haan, and Smith 1973; Carroll 1989; Friedman and Ayres 2013).

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[6] Personal political salience (Duncan and Stewart 2007) is measured by asking participants to rate a series of political events (e.g., World War II, Obama presidency) "in terms of how personally meaningful it was to you (i.e., how much it affected your life or reflects your values and concerns)."

Many of the relationships between these personality and life experience variables and activism are mediated by group consciousness or possessing a politicized collective identity. That is, variables like Openness to Experience and experiences of discrimination tend to be related to the development of a critical analysis of structural power systems (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation). Possessing a politicized collective identity has been shown to be a robust predictor of participation in collective action (Duncan 2018; van Zomeren et al. 2008).

However, the research is less complete about the variables that might moderate the relationship between group consciousness and political activism. That is, why do some people who develop a politicized collective identity act on it through protest behavior, whereas others do not? Duncan (2012, 2018) compiled a list of potential moderators based on the personality and social psychological activism literature. This list includes both personality variables (e.g., political self-efficacy, generativity, impulsivity, optimism) and life experience variables (e.g., warmth of family of origin, activist role models, material resources, access to social movement organizations). Although all of these variables have been found to be related to either group consciousness and/or activism, their moderating role has mostly been hypothesized and not tested empirically, probably because little research has integrated variables found in both personality and social psychology. Clearly this represents a potential area for future research.

More recent research has focused on expanding the model presented by van Zomeren et al. (2008) to include such variables as moral motives (van Zomeren 2013), and non-traditional modes of activism, like online activism (Quintelier and Theocharis 2013). However, the research on volunteering makes it clear that the literature on protest behavior could benefit from a consideration of other types of motivations for activism not encompassed by the group consciousness/politicized collective identity models. Specifically, the Volunteer Process Model's (Snyder 1993) six functions (value expression, development of new understanding, opportunities for social interaction, opportunities for career development and advancement, protection from negative emotions, and personal development and self-esteem enhancement) are probably as relevant to motivating political protest behavior as they are to motivating volunteer behavior. For example, the volunteer motive of value expression is analogous to moral motives in the protest literature. However, the other five volunteer motives could also serve important functions in motivating protest behavior as well. To illustrate, many activists attend their first protest with family members or friends. In addition, activists who have greater social support in their activist communities tend to persist longer in their activism then those who have less social support (Andrews 1991). Both of these observations are consistent with the volunteer motive, "opportunities for social interaction," but this motivation has been understudied in the activism literature. Similarly, "protection from negative emotions" (specifically guilt) has been offered as a motive for ally activism by members of dominant groups (Calcagno 2016; Iyer, Leach, and Crosby 2003). Applying the Volunteer Process Model to understand motivation for protest behavior could enrich our understanding of the complex reasons people choose to participate in protest behavior.

Conclusion and Future Directions

To summarize, this chapter reviewed the psychological literature on the factors involved in three types of political participation: (1) voting and other types of conventional political participation, (2) volunteering, and (3) collective protest behavior, and found that examining all three types of literatures allowed us to identify the variables that are both common and unique to each tradition and recognize new potential research directions in each domain. All three domains tried to understand why people participate in politics. All three looked at personality characteristics related to political participation. However, all three literatures could be enriched by future research on variables implicated in the research on the other types of political participation. In particular, the voting literature could benefit by considering the role of politicized identities and the psychological meaning of life experience variables, the volunteering literature could benefit from an incorporation of individual difference variables and moderators, and the protest literature could benefit from thinking about other potential psychological mediators of relationships between individual difference variables and activism.

If we consider all three types of political participation in conjunction with one another, a new set of questions arises. First, how do individuals decide which type of political participation to engage in? We can consider political participation as occurring along two continua depicted in Figure 4.6: (1) level of conventionalism, and (2) cost or investment.

Looking at these two continua together we can categorize behavior ranging from the conventional and relatively low cost (e.g., voting) to high-investment unconventional behavior (e.g., attending demonstrations). During the Black Lives Matter social movements

		Level of conventionalism	
		Conventional	Unconventional
Cost	Low	Voting	Writing letters, boycotts, online activism
	High	Political Party Volunteering	Attending demonstrations, working for protest groups

FIGURE 4.6 Types of Political Participation by Level of Conventionalism and Cost/Investment Required

of 2020, Hunter (2020) wrote an opinion piece that argued for the importance of political protest:

> But people who understand movements know that voting is not the end—it's one part of the process. Movements amplify complex questions that otherwise get simplified to sound bites in elections. Questions like: Does society really need armed police answering mental health crises? Can the police be reformed while still armed with military-grade weapons? What are practical alternatives to police systems? By changing people's views, movements apply pressure to decision makers.

This opinion piece highlights the idea that different types of political behaviors serve different purposes, not only for the individuals participating, but for social change.

Other questions arise from looking at Figure 4.6. First, how much overlap is there between types of political participation? For example, do protesters also engage in lower-cost unconventional behaviors and both high- and low-cost conventional political behaviors? Evidence from the 2008 and 2012 American National Election Studies and the 2005 and 2010 British Election Studies show that people who had engaged in at least one political protest in the previous four years were more likely than the general population to vote (Aytaç, Stokes, and Rau 2017; Giugni and Grasso 2019). Second, is it possible to trace a path from one type of participation to any of the others? Is voting, for example, a "gateway" form of political participation? Or perhaps more likely, is participation in any relatively low-cost political behavior related to subsequent higher-cost political behavior? For those who participate in both conventional and unconventional forms of political participation, what are the psychological factors involved in the movement from one form to another? Third, what are the personality and life experience variables that influence the types of political participation in which a person chooses to engage? Fourth, are there particular personality and life experience variables that are exclusively related to some types of participation and not others? All of these are questions that could be answered with future research.

Finally, there are other questions about the psychology of political participation that arise, not from the integration of these literatures, but from taking a step back and thinking about psychology as a whole. First of all, what are the mental health impacts of political participation? Research on the political participation of African American, Latinx, feminists, and trans people show a mix of positive benefits and negative mental-health implications (Goldberg, Smith, and Beemyn 2020; Hope et al. 2018; Nelson et al. 2008). These studies show that possessing a critical analysis of power structures in society can serve as a protective factor when experiencing discrimination. However, possessing such a critical lens can result in increased levels of stress and anxiety. Future research could examine the mediating and moderating factors involved in the mental-health implications of political participation.

Second, how can researchers integrate the complexity of individual identities and experiences into research on the psychology of political participation? Cole (2009) outlined three questions that researchers could ask that would allow them to consider who was being represented in their research and who was left out, what role inequality played in the phenomenon in question, and what similarities there were across groups. Most research on the correlates and consequences of political participation across fields has focused on groups defined by one major social identity—for example gender, race, generation, or religion. Finding ways to complicate this research to consider intersecting identities can help us better understand the very real effects that complex identities have on all sorts of political participation (see, also, Chapter 42 by Christine Slaughter and Nadia Brown. this volume).

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CHAPTER 5

ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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Economists have long been interested in the topic of political participation, and voter turnout in particular. Their interest in the topic can likely be explained by the fact that "for the economist, voting forms an important limiting case where people decide while having only a small and 'intangible' interest in the outcome" (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000: 113). Much of this work is inspired by rational choice theories, and seeks to explain an individual's decision to participate as the result of a cost–benefit calculus of participation. This theoretical framework, however, often falls short of explaining why citizens turn out to vote (Blais 2000) or protest (Aytaç and Stokes 2019). Scholars therefore claim that voting and participation are a "paradox" and complement their explanatory models with psychological measures.

Rational theories of participation in essence focus on the costs and benefits of political participation. These costs and benefits come in many forms, and taking stock of all that work goes well beyond the scope of this chapter. After reviewing economic theories of participation in general, we therefore assess empirical work in depth by focusing on the effects of economic conditions on participation—and voting in particular. Economic conditions are relevant to the costs of voting, as having more economic resources makes it easier to overcome the hurdles to participation (Brady et al. 1995). In addition, individual economic conditions also capture the benefits to voting, since those who have more, also have more at stake in politics.

We systematize our review of previous studies concerning the effects of economic conditions on voter turnout by taking a meta-analytical approach. We analyze the findings from earlier work by focusing on the direction and significance of the effects, but also perform a quantitative analysis of the estimated effects when possible. We complement our analysis of the connection between economic conditions and turnout with a discussion of the ways in which economic conditions shape other forms of participation—and protest in particular. Before presenting our methodological approach and the results of our analyses, however, we provide an overview of the main economic theories of participation.

Economic Theories of Participation

A good starting point in any discussion of economics and participation, and the role of interests for explaining participation in particular, is the work of Downs (1957). In his economic theory of voting, Downs (1957) proposed the rational voter hypothesis, which holds that citizens vote in order to get an election outcome they desire, that is, they are instrumental voters. However, as one voter among many, the lone voter has virtually no chance of actually influencing the outcome decisively. Thus, the costs they incur in voting, for example time away from work, gas money, standing in line, will always exceed the benefit (since his or her vote makes no difference to the outcome). This idea is expressed in the "calculus of voting," that models the likelihood of voting (V) as a function of the costs (C) and benefits (B) of voting:

$$V = \left(p \times B\right) - C \tag{1}$$

As can be seen from Equation 1, this economic theory of voting does not simply consider voting an additive function of the benefits and costs of voting, but takes into account the probability that a single voter's decision alters the outcome of an election (p) (Downs 1957; Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Given that p × B will be infinitely small, it follows that the costs of voting will always outweigh the benefits (Blais 2000). Rational voters, then, should not vote, but they do.

What holds for voter turnout also holds for other forms of political participation, either institutionalized or non-institutionalized. Many such other forms of participation are even more costly, because they imply a larger organizing effort, or require considerably more time. Take, for example, the time a protestor spends in the streets versus the time it takes to cast a ballot. Rational theories, therefore, cannot explain "why citizens bother" or why they protest or participate in other ways either (Aytaç and Stokes 2019).

How do citizens overcome this "paradox" and participate in politics despite the costs? Many answers have been given, including (at the micro-level) civic duty, the costs of abstention, expressive voting, strategic choice, and educational background; and (at the macro-level) campaigning, the degree of competition, electoral rules, and the issues at stake (see the current literature review in Kaniovski [2019]). In this chapter, we focus on the last point—the role of issues, namely how economic change shapes political participation. In a first step, we conduct a detailed meta-analysis of the connection between economic indicators and turnout. In a second section, we broaden the view and review the literature that has studied the connection between economic indicators and other forms of political participation—with a specific focus on protest.

Economic Conditions and Turnout

A Focus on Economic Conditions and Turnout

To narrow down the scope of our review of earlier work on the connection between economic conditions and participation, our focus is on electoral participation. This choice is motivated by the fact that turnout is the type of participation that is most widespread (Brady et al. 1995), and that plays a crucial role in realizing democratic participation (Powell 2000). The wealth of scholarly work on the topic of electoral turnout follows logically from the fact that electoral participation plays such a central role in democracy.

We wish to answer the question how economic conditions affect turnout. This question has already received some attention, but considerably less attention than the question of how the economy correlates with the vote choice. Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita (2019: 110), for example, summarize the political science literature on the role of economic indicators as following: "Numerous studies show that support for incumbent parties declines during economic recessions. Much less is known about the relation between economic conjuncture and electoral participation."

How economic indicators affect turnout is also a more perplexing question than that relating economic independent variables to vote choice, because in the latter setting there exists the ordering framework provided by the classic hypothesis—the reward or punishment of the incumbent party. That is, under prosperous economic conditions, voters are expected to reward incumbents by voting for them, while they vote them out of office when the economy deteriorates (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). When the dependent variable stands a step back, however, and the focus is on going to vote in the first place, the impact of economic conditions is less obvious. That comes from the fact that, often, "no theory about economics and turnout is compelling" (Lewis-Beck and Lockerbie 1989, 158). Take, as an outstanding example, how economic hard times impact the average citizen, Jane Q. Public. Hard times may keep her at work, perhaps taking on extra hours in order to earn enough to make ends meet. Or, they may spur her to vote regularly and often, in order to express her policy feelings about the economic downturn. Or, she may not be either more or less likely to vote, because she believes her difficulties lie with the office manager and not with the government.

These different theoretical arguments and perspectives on how economic conditions affect turnout have all been given some attention in the literature. In fact, scholars have defended each of these three theoretical possibilities, and some have even coined a fourth option—the connection between economic conditions and turnout would be curvilinear. In the next section, we discuss each of these arguments in turn, with a focus on the theoretical arguments that motivate each of these expectations.

Theoretical Expectations

A first theoretical expectation about the connection between economic conditions and turnout is referred to as the "withdrawal hypothesis" (Rosenstone 1982). The expectation, that is depicted in panel (a) in Figure 5.1, is that under economic adversity, citizens withdraw and abstain from turnout. According to this perspective, when the economic situation is bad—with negative economic growth or many citizens unemployed—citizens will withdraw from voting (i.e., low turnout). Under prosperous economic conditions, in contrast, they turn out in large numbers.

The "withdrawal hypothesis" is inspired by work that stresses that political participation requires resources, such as time, money, and civic skills (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995). During hard times, it is argued, citizens simply lack the resources to engage and participate in politics. Rosenstone (1982: 25) summarizes the argument as follows: “When a person suffers economic adversity his scarce resources are spent holding body and soul together, not on remote concerns like politics.” The intuition is that economic duress forces individuals to focus their resources (time and money) on improving their economic situation, lessening their engagement with politics (Bahry and Lipsmeyer 2001).

The “withdrawal hypothesis” is defended through other means as well. It is argued, for instance, that personal economic adversity, provoked by, for example, job loss, involves a psychological toll, and is associated with low self-confidence, apathy, and low efficacy—factors that can further reduce participation (Cebula 2017; Fauvelle-Aymar and Stegmaier 2008; Rosenstone 1982). The effects of economic adversity are also said to be indirect, as the loss of social interaction through unemployment, or the effects of foreclosure, imply that individuals are less likely to discuss politics, and less likely to be mobilized to turn out to vote (Rosenstone 1982; Shah and Wichowsky 2019). Finally, scholars also refer to a self-interest model of political participation to defend the “withdrawal hypothesis.” That is, those who are doing well economically—in contrast to the less well-off—have “something to protect in turning out” (Nadeau et al. 2019: 265).

While theoretically compelling, scholars have not reached a consensus regarding the validity of the withdrawal hypothesis. Some work even argues for the exact opposite relation between economic conditions and political participation. They theorize that citizens will be mobilized to turn out to vote when they—or the country—suffer economically (panel (b) in Figure 5.1). The reasoning is that worsening economic conditions cause citizens

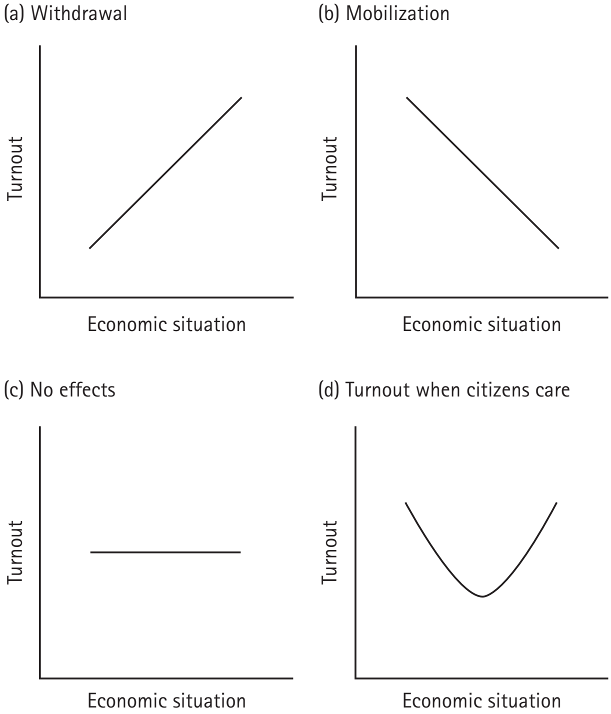

FIGURE 5.1 The link between the economy and turnout: Theoretical expectations

to put blame on the government, and mobilize them to voice their concerns about the economy by turning out to vote (Burden and Wichowsky 2014, Guigni and Grasso 2019, Southwell 1996). In addition, under economic downturn, the distributional stakes are higher—serving as a strong incentive to become active politically (Martin and Veiga 2013). Finally, the "mobilization hypothesis" is motivated by work from political psychologists, who have shown evidence of a negativity bias in citizens' political attitudes and behavior (Lau 1982, Soroka et al. 2019). As a result of such a bias, "[C]itizens become more aware of economic fluctuations during an economic downturn, and may be induced to become more engaged in the political arena in order to express their grievances and to seek remedies for the poor economic performance of the incumbent government" (Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita 2019: 111).

A third hypothesis, that Rosenstone (1982) already put forward, is that there is no connection at all between economic conditions and electoral participation. This null-effects hypothesis, that is depicted in panel (c) of Figure 5.1, is motivated by two different arguments. First, macro-economic conditions are argued to exert no influence on electoral turnout if they are unrelated to citizens' personal economic situation (Rosenstone 1982). Second, if citizens do not think the government is to blame (or to credit) for the state of the economy, or if they do not believe that a change of government would affect economic policy decisions, they have no reason to adjust their participatory behavior in response to economic conditions (Lewis-Beck and Lockerbie 1989; Rosenstone 1982).

Observing a lack of theoretical agreement in the literature on the topic, Gomez and Hansford (2015) proposed a way out by combining insights from the withdrawal and mobilization hypotheses. This final theoretical perspective moves away from linear effects and instead supposes a curvilinear association between the economic situation and turnout (panel (d) in Figure 5.1). In particular, Gomez and Hansford (2015) argue that citizens will participate when they have strong incentives to do so, and these incentives are absent when the economy is neither worsening or improving. By contrast, when the economy is particularly bad, or particularly good, citizens have reasons to turn out to vote.

This final possibility, while theoretically plausible, has only received scant empirical testing. Most empirical research instead focuses on the withdrawal and mobilization hypotheses. This is also evident from our meta-analysis of previous work, that focuses exclusively on the presence of linear positive or negative associations between economic indicators and voter turnout.

Empirical Approaches

At a theoretical level, scholars have given equally plausible arguments for a positive, a negative, a null, or a curvilinear association between economic conditions and electoral turnout. What we want to know, of course, is which expectation receives most empirical support. Do hard times mostly boost turnout in an incremental fashion? Or does the relationship follow a curve? A positive or negative one?

As an echo of the theoretical debates on the questions, empirical work on the topic appears—at first sight—inconclusive. To be sure, since the early studies on the connection between economic conditions and turnout (Rosenstone 1982), much has been done.

Scholars have used a variety of methods and have studied the question at the micro- (i.e., individual) and at the macro-levels. They have used different types of economic variables on the right-hand side of the equation, for example objective ones occurring mostly at the aggregate national level such as GDP growth, unemployment rate, inflation rate, income inequality, globalization; and, subjective ones occurring mostly at the individual survey level such as egotropic or sociotropic economic perceptions. With respect to the dependent variable, studies have analyzed (at different levels) reported turnout, turnout intention, and validated turnout. From this variety of approaches, methods, and measures, however, a consensus on the shape of the relation between economic conditions and turnout has not been reached yet. Summarizing the literature on the topic, Blais (2006: 117) argued that "[t]he conclusion must be that there is no clear relationship between the economic conjuncture and turnout."

Of course, the variety of approaches, methods, measures and even levels of analysis makes it hard to evaluate which of the theoretical expectations receives most support. In order to gain a more conclusive answer to the question how economic conditions relate to turnout, we argue that such design features should be taken into account. In order to do so, we turn to a systematic meta-analysis of the scientific investigations on the economy–turnout nexus carried out to date.

Meta-Analytical Strategy and Coding

Our focus for the meta-analysis is on published articles in international peer-reviewed journals. We identified 24 published articles that met our criteria for inclusion, as detailed in the Supplementary materials.[1] Of this selection of articles, a large majority analyze the effect of the economy (exclusively) on the macro-level, and our meta-analysis therefore mostly focuses on the aggregate-level connection between economic conditions and turnout rates.

Within each article, we subsequently identified regression models that provide an estimate of the effect of economic conditions on turnout. For simplicity, we focused on the estimates from models that did not include an interaction term between economic variables and other variables. The studies that we retained often included more than one estimate, either in the main paper or in the supplementary materials to the article. We coded all the relevant models in the 24 articles, resulting in a final dataset with 355 tests of the effect of economic conditions on turnout.[2] We subsequently proceeded in a systematic coding of the models, compiling information on the articles (authors, year of publication, and journal) and the samples, the estimation approach, the type of independent and dependent variables, allowing us to subset the observations on any one of those variables. We also coded the authors' hypothesized effects.[3]

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[1] The Supplementary materials can be accessed at https://osf.io/7vtx3/?view_only=f231806a3eb94f33bdfbe62f77e0b250. Appendix 2 in the online Supplementary materials lists the 24 studies that were retrieved and coded.

[2] For the analyses presented in this chapter, we rely on 311 test estimates from 20 different studies of the most commonly used indicators of economic conditions: GDP growth, GDP per capita, unemployment (rates), inflation, income, economic perceptions, and facing foreclosure. The codebook can be found in Appendix 3 of the online Supplementary materials.

We take two different approaches to analyzing the coded data: a vote-counting technique and a systematic analysis taking into account the estimated effects, their size, and uncertainty. First, since we coded the direction and the significance of the effects, we are able to conduct a meta-analysis based on the vote-counting technique (Smets and van Ham 2013).[4] For this type of an analysis, we can also take into account the authors' hypothesis to distinguish between anomalies, failures, and success—referring to estimates that oppose the authors' expectations, that are not significant, and that are in line with the authors' expectations and significant respectively.

Second, for the macro-level studies—that are more numerous than studies focusing on the individual level—we also perform a meta-analysis of the estimated effects in the coded studies. Importantly, the regression estimates that we are interested in are the result of different estimation approaches, and sometimes capture the effect of different indicators of the economy as well. To enhance the comparability of the estimates, we follow earlier meta-analytical work and compute partial correlations from the coefficients' t-value, the number of observations, and the overall number of variables contained in the respective regression model (Dinesen et al. 2020). A partial correlation is the correlation between electoral turnout and an economic predictor that is statistically adjusted for all other variables contained in the respective regression model. Like the common correlation, the partial correlation is bounded between -1 and 1, which respectively indicate a perfect negative or positive association. We compute the partial correlations through the *escalc* function in the R package *metafor* (Viechtbauer 2010). Given that most studies included different estimates, and because these estimates are correlated, we first obtain a meta-estimate by study, and then perform a meta-analysis on these study-pooled estimates (see also, Dinesen et al. 2020).

Meta-Analysis of Macro-Level Studies

Before analyzing the estimates and quantifying the overall effect of different economic indicators on turnout, Table 5.1 offers an overview of the hypothesized effects in studies examining the effects of four broad indicators of the state of the economy: GDP growth, GDP per capita, unemployment (rate), and inflation. This table illustrates the lack of consensus in terms of the theoretical mechanisms connecting economic conditions and electoral participation. In fact, with the exception of GDP per capita, previous work does not consistently hypothesize a positive or a negative effect of the indicators of economic conditions. This lack of consensus is particularly stark when focusing on the effect of GDP growth. Out

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[3] To verify the reliability of our coding, we trained a research assistant on the detailed codebook that is available as part of the online Supplementary Materials, and asked them to code a random sample of the papers. Doing so, we observed a perfect match (100%) of our coding and that of the research assistant.

[4] In this set of analyses, we can also include studies and tests for which we did not have the necessary information to calculate the partial correlations that are used in the second step. This happens, for example, when the authors report significance levels or p-values, but not the standard errors or t-values for an estimate.

Table 5.1 Hypothesized Effects of Economic Conditions on Voter Turnout (Macro-Level)

Measure	(N) Positive	(N) Negative	(N) No hypotheses	(N) Total
GDP growth	3	4	0	7
GDP per capita	5	0	0	5
Unemployment	1	3	1	5
Inflation	0	1	1	2

Note: Number of studies hypothesizing a positive, negative, or no effect of the main economic measures on turnout.

of a total of seven studies that have tested the macro-link between GDP growth and electoral turnout, three propose a positive effect (in line with the withdrawal hypothesis) and four have hypothesized a negative association (in line with the mobilization hypothesis) between GDP growth and voter turnout.

To get a first sense of the empirical evidence in favor of the different hypotheses in this body of work, we rely on the count technique and evaluate the number of reported positive and negative effects, and whether effects were found to be significant (at the 95% level). We focus on the four main categories of economic indicators at the aggregate level for which several studies have tested its effect, that is, GDP growth, GDP per capita, unemployment rate, and inflation, and summarize the results for each indicator in Table 5.2.

Starting with the effect of GDP growth on turnout, a majority (52.8%) of published tests of the relation between GDP growth and voter turnout shows a *negative* and significant effect. While this is suggestive for worsening economic conditions motivating citizens to turn out to vote (the mobilization hypothesis), the evidence in favor of this hypothesis is far from conclusive. About 15 percent of the tests are anomalies, showing the exact opposite relations between GDP growth and turnout.

The evidence is even less conclusive when looking at the role of GDP per capita. Table 5.2 points out that there are roughly the same number of tests suggesting a *positive* effect of GDP per capita on turnout as there are tests indicating a *negative* relation between GDP per capita and voter turnout.

Turning to the estimated effect of unemployment on voter turnout, Table 5.2 indicates that the majority of tests of this relationship point to a *positive* association between unemployment rates and turnout—which is further in line with the mobilization hypothesis. However, most of these tests are not significant at the 95 percent level.

Finally, for inflation all previous tests have shown a *positive* association between inflation rates and voter turnout, though about one third of these tests were not statistically significant at the conventional p-value of 0.05 (see Table 5.2).

Overall, the summary statistics in Table 5.2 provide some support for the mobilization hypothesis, with most evidence pointing in the direction of higher turnout rates when GDP growth is low, unemployment rates are high, and inflation is high. However, it is also obvious

Table 5.2 Meta-Analysis of the Effect of Economic Conditions on Voter Turnout (Macro-Level), Count Technique

Measure	Positive not significant	Positive significant	Negative not significant	Negative significant	Total
GDP growth	13.9%	1.4%	31.9%	52.8%	100% (72)
GDP per capita	30.8%	25.6%	23.1%	20.5%	100% (39)
Unemployment	46.5%	23.3%	4.7%	25.6%	100% (86)
Inflation	32.1%	67.9%	0.0%	0.0%	100% (53)

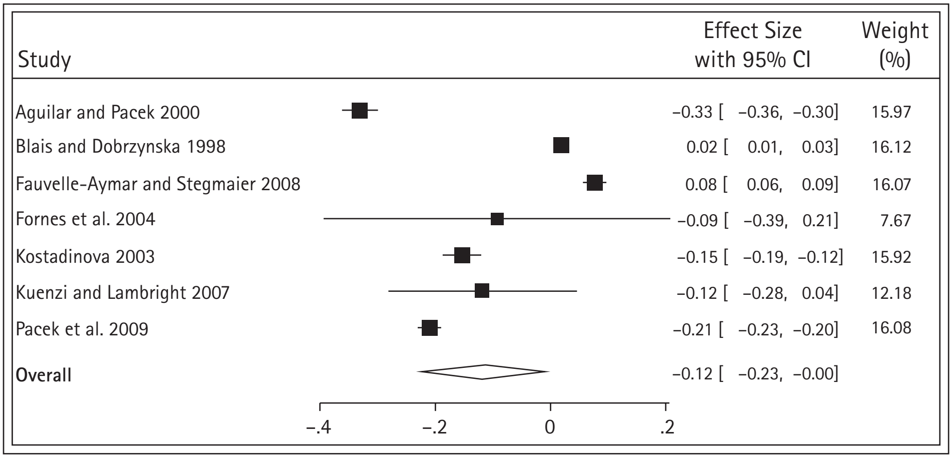
Note: Number of tests showing a positive (significant) or negative (significant) effect of the main economic measures on turnout. Total number of tests is reported in parentheses in the Total column.

that the evidence on the effect of these economic indicators on turnout is very mixed, and far from conclusive. To more systematically assess the available evidence for the macro-level relation between economic conditions and turnout, we turn to a quantitative meta-analysis in which we take into account the effect sizes and uncertainty. In addition, we take into account the clustering of tests within studies by taking a two-step approach, obtaining a study-pooled estimate for each publication first, before retrieving a meta-estimate of those study-pooled effects. We visualize the results by means of forest plots.

Starting with GDP growth in Figure 5.2, a withdrawal perspective would lead to the expectation that GDP growth and turnout are positively correlated—implying the electorate turns out when things go well, but withdraws from voting when the economy deteriorates. In contrast, the mobilization hypothesis leads to the opposite expectation. That is, that worsening economic conditions mobilize citizens to turn out to vote. Figure 5.2 shows a forest plot of the study-pooled estimates of seven studies that provide one or more estimates of the connection between GDP growth and turnout, and the 95 percent confidence intervals around these estimates. The bottom row in Figure 5.2 shows the overall meta-estimate of these studies. That estimate points towards a *negative* relationship between GDP growth and turnout, in line with the mobilization hypothesis. However, the confidence intervals around that estimate touch zero, and the forest plot points out that there is substantial variation between studies. Two published articles in fact show evidence of a positive and significant association between GDP growth and voter turnout. Overall, Figure 5.2 hints at a negative association between GDP growth and turnout, though that association appears uncertain and unstable.

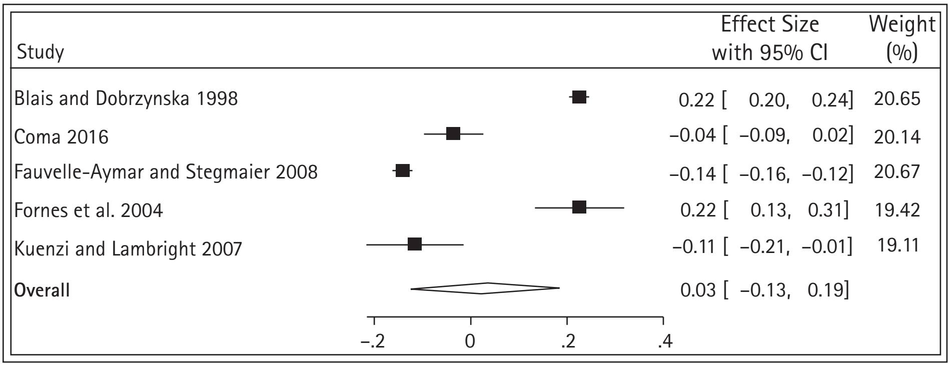
Figure 5.3 shows a similar forest plot, this time focusing on studies that have estimated the association between GDP per capita and voter turnout. This forest plot provides even less evidence of a consistent relationship between economic conditions and voter turnout. Out of the five published articles that provide estimates for GDP capita, two show a positive effect, and three include negative estimates. Not surprisingly, this results in an overall meta-estimate for GDP per capita that is not statistically different from zero.

Turning to the estimated effect of inflation on voter turnout, Figure 5.4 shows a meta-estimate that is *negative* and statistically different from zero—which is in line with the



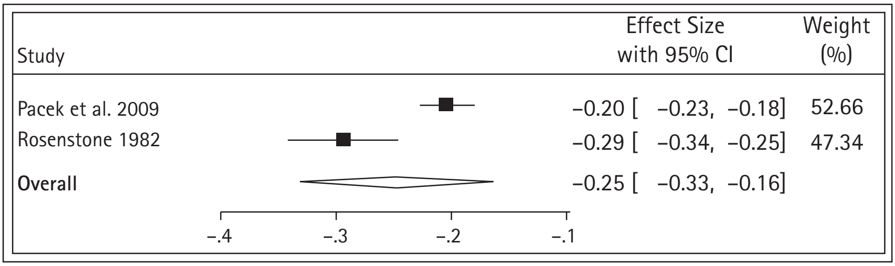
Random-effects REML model

FIGURE 5.2. Forest plots of study-pooled partial estimates of the macro-relationship between GDP growth and voter turnout



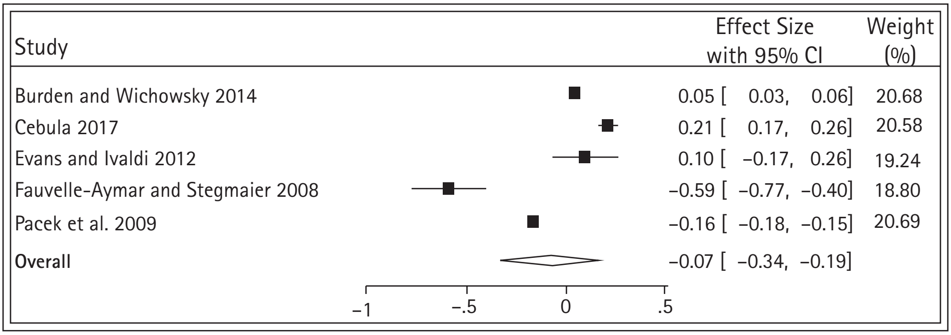
Random-effects REML model

FIGURE 5.3. Forest plots of study-pooled partial estimates of the macro-relationship between GDP per capita and voter turnout



Random-effects REML model

FIGURE 5.4. Forest plots of study-pooled partial estimates of the macro-relationship between inflation and voter turnout



Random-effects REML model

FIGURE 5.5. Forest plots of study-pooled partial estimates of the macro-relationship between unemployment and voter turnout

mobilization hypothesis. This estimate, however, is based on estimates from two studies. One of these studies is Rosenstone's seminal work from the 1980s. While suggestive, it is clear that the role of inflation on turnout needs more testing.

We finally assess estimates of the relation between unemployment rates and voter turnout. For this indicator, a positive association would be consistent with the mobilization hypothesis (i.e., higher turnout when unemployment is high), while a negative association would be in line with the withdrawal hypothesis. The forest plot in Figure 5.5 provides more evidence of the inconclusiveness of previous empirical work. Out of five papers that include one or more estimates of the association between unemployment and turnout, two show a negative association, and three show a positive association. This results in an overall meta-estimate that cannot be distinguished from zero.

While much previous work has studied the macro-level effect of economic conditions on voter turnout, a clear answer to the question how the economy impacts electoral participation is missing from this literature. This lack of consensus is evident at the theoretical level, with different studies hypothesizing opposite effects of the same indicator, but is particularly apparent when assessing variation in the direction and uncertainty of the estimated effect. When assessing the two main theoretical perspectives connecting economic conditions to electoral participation (i.e., withdrawal and mobilization), our meta-analysis shows most evidence for the mobilization hypothesis—suggesting worsening economic conditions mobilize citizens to turn out to vote. For GDP per capita and unemployment, the conclusion however has to be that the evidence is most consistent with the third theoretical possibility. That is, there is essentially no relation between these economic indicators and macro-level voter turnout.

Meta-analysis of Individual-Level Studies

The large majority of published articles studying the connection between economic conditions and turnout that we retrieved and coded focus on the macro-level. That is, these studies evaluate the effects of economic conditions on aggregate-level voter turnout, measured at the national or the subnational level. A few studies, however, analyze the connection

Table 5.3 Meta-Analysis of the Effect of Economic Conditions on Voter Turnout (Micro-Level), Count Technique

Measure	Positive not significant	Positive significant	Negative not significant	Negative significant	Total
Economic perception	27.0%	16.2%	46.0%	10.8%	100% (37)
Unemployed	44.4%	44.4%	11.1%	0.0%	100% (9)
Income	37.5%	25.0%	31.3%	6.3%	100% (16)
Facing foreclosure	0.0%	71.4%	28.6%	0.0%	100% (7)

Note: Number of tests showing a positive (significant) or negative (significant) effect of the main economic measures on turnout. Total number of tests is reported in parentheses in the Total column.

between indicators of economic conditions and citizens' likelihood to turn out to vote at a micro-level. These studies mostly focus on the effect of individual-level economic measures, such as individuals' perceptions of the state of the economy, their (household) income, and whether they were personally unemployed, or faced foreclosure.

Given the limited number of articles taking a micro-level approach to study the connection between the economy and voter turnout, we only meta-analyze the estimates in these publications by means of the vote-counting technique.

Table 5.3 summarizes the results of these analyses. Overall, the studies we retrieved offer very little evidence of a connection between individuals' economic conditions and their likelihood to turn out to vote. According to a mobilization perspective, better economic perceptions and higher incomes should be negatively associated with turnout, while being unemployed and facing foreclosure should be positively related to turnout. The withdrawal hypothesis, in contrast, would lead to the exact opposite expectations. As can be seen from Table 5.3, there is not much evidence in favor of either of those theoretical perspectives.

For economic perceptions, most tests of their relation with citizens' likelihood to turn out to vote show insignificant associations. While the majority of tests suggest that economic perceptions are negatively associated with turnout, more than four in ten tests point in the opposite direction. The dataset only includes estimates of nine tests of the individual-level connection between unemployment and electoral participation. Most of those tests hint at a positive, but often insignificant, association between being unemployed and turning out to vote. For income, with almost 70 percent of all tests resulting in insignificant associations, the results for the impact of income on individuals' likelihood of voting are far from conclusive. Finally, the effects for foreclosure appear most conclusive, showing either a positive effect of facing foreclosure on turnout or an insignificant negative effect.[5]

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[5] Note, however, that these estimates are all part of a single published article.

Our meta-analytical approach to summarizing the findings of previous work that has studied the effects of economic conditions on individuals' likelihood to turn out to vote testifies to a field of research marked by much uncertainty. There is somewhat more evidence for the mobilization hypothesis, suggesting those facing bad economic conditions, are more likely to turn out to vote. However, this evidence is altogether weak, and there are equally findings—some significant—that are more in line with the withdrawal hypothesis.

The Economy and Other Forms of Participation: Protest

Thus far, we have examined economics as it impacts voter turnout, the standard bearer of conventional political behavior. The connection between economic conditions and other types of political participation also merits attention, however. Here, we focus on a main indicator of unconventional mass political behavior: protest. Because studies in that area are fewer and more diverse, a full meta-analysis cannot be developed. Still, we are able to follow the foregoing frame by focusing on leading studies. As before, we look at the macro-level, then turn to the micro-level.

Starting with the findings of studies that focus on the macro-association between economic conditions and participation, the work of Arce (2010: 674) focuses on Latin America. In many ways, this is a test region for investigating economics and political behavior in challenged democratic systems (see also Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2008). Arce's primary dependent variable is collective protest, which consists of event counts representing the summation of the annual number of anti-government demonstrations, riots, and strikes in a country. These three related protest indicators are aggregated in an effort to capture the overall trend of mobilization across 17 Latin American countries, starting in 1978 with the "third wave" of democracy (Arce 2010: 675). Arce studies the role of different economic indicators, with specific attention to economic liberalization,[6] in addition to more conventional measures of GDP growth, GDP per capita and inflation. The analyses of Arce (2010) reveal that the coefficients associated with economic liberalization, GDP growth, GDP per capita, and inflation are all statistically insignificant. In this way, the author concludes that: "political explanations clearly outweigh the salience of economic accounts of collective protest" (Arce 2010: 679).

Özler (2013: 142), also carries out a comparative analysis on the topic, leveraging information on protest behavior in 90 countries and a total of 402 electoral periods. The author uses two protest dependent variables: 1) the average yearly anti-government demonstrations between two electoral periods in a country and 2) the number of all civil protests in a country, including all demonstrations, obstructions, processions, defacements, altruisms, strikes, and boycotts. Özler (2013) focuses specifically on the role of the average GDP per capita between two electoral periods, which he argues is a good indicator of economic development.

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[6] The economic liberalization is operationalized as an economic reform index (lagged one year) constructed by Morley et al. (1999).

He finds GDP per capita has an insignificant effect on the first protest measure (the anti-government demonstration measure), which supports Arce's (2010) null conclusion. However, he also reports a positive and significant effect on the second protest measure (number of all civil protests in a country), which is more in line with the withdrawal hypothesis.

The foregoing, macro-focused, investigations offer evidence that does not cumulate in one direction. Arce (2010) finds no economic effects. In contrast, Özler (2013) finds that GDP per capita might be positively correlated with protest—though it is important to point out that this finding only holds for one of his indicators of protest. Let us take a look at research that focuses on individual-level measures of protest, to see if the causal links become more apparent. We consult five pivotal studies, each of which employ comparative surveys of citizen protest behavior. This work analyses how individuals' economic attitudes, macro-economic conditions, or the interaction between both, correlate with protest behavior.

The earliest of these studies (Lewis-Beck and Lockerbie 1989) examines Eurobarometer data from four Western European countries—Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. To capture protest behavior, they rely on the following question: "It sometimes happens that people go out and join a public demonstration to show their discontent or disagreement. Have you ever done this within the last 4 or 5 years?" To examine the connection between the economy and protest behavior, Lewis-Beck and Lockerbie (1989) rely on an extensive battery, which explores the respondent's evaluation of their household financial situation over the past year, plus the impact of retrospective and prospective government economic policies. They find that, regardless of country, personal household situation fails to register statistical significance. However, the variable, "government will make economy worse" had a positive effect on protest in each of the four countries.

The work of Dalton et al. (2010) provides another relevant study, though their focus is on how macro-economic conditions impact individuals' likelihood to participate. The authors use data from the World Values Study, that asks respondents to describe their past participation in five types of activity: signing a petition; joining in boycotts; attending lawful demonstrations; joining unofficial strikes; occupying buildings or factories. Combining respondents' answers on these items, Dalton et al. (2010) investigate the association between GDP per capita and an individual's likelihood to participate. The authors find, even after strong controls, that "protest is higher in more affluent nations" (Dalton et al. 2010: 70).

In a current study, Kurer et al. (2019: 873–874) make use of the data from the European Social Survey to explore protest behavior in 28 European Union countries. To study participation, the authors combine information on whether respondents took part in a demonstration, signed a petition, wore a protest badge, or boycotted certain products. The independent (economic) variables the authors use examine different measures of unemployment. More specifically, 1) they relate group-specific unemployment rates to the group-specific unemployment rate in the previous year, resulting in the deprivation measure; 2) they also relate the group-specific unemployment rate to the average unemployment rate in the country, resulting in the relative status measure; 3) and they include the official unemployment rate at the time of the survey. They find, as might be expected, that higher employment status reduces protest, but lower employment status increases it. However, no independent impact on protest behavior emerges from the unemployment rate itself (Kurer et al. 2019).

Grasso and Giugni (2016) conducted a recent, original cross-national survey in nine European countries in the context of the "Living with Hard Times" project. Using their individual-level dataset, Grasso and Giugni (2016) focus on whether someone had participated or not in protests in the last 12 months. As an economic indicator, they study the role of respondents' subjective feelings of relative deprivation. Specifically, respondents were asked whether they felt that the economic situation of their household was much better or much worse than it was five years ago. In addition, they account for individuals' employment status and macro-economic conditions, such as the unemployment levels and GDP growth, as well as indicators of social spending. The results of Grasso and Giugni (2016) are suggestive of the role of economic conditions for explaining protest behavior. They find that deprivation has a positive effect on protest participation, though it should be noted that respondents who are unemployed appear to protest less. Furthermore, they find that GDP growth has a negative and significant effect on protest. Grasso and Giugni (2016) also find that the effect of deprivation is higher as unemployment and social spending goes up. As such, the authors conclude that "individuals respond rationally to the experience of crisis, both at the individual and aggregate levels, by expressing their voice politically though protest" (Grasso and Giugni 2016: 676).

In a follow-up analysis that draws on the same data-set, Grasso et al. (2019) expand the measures of unconventional participation, to include dummies for volunteering with an anti-cuts organization, demonstrating and striking, as well as looking at conventional participation measures. From their results, the authors conclude that "feelings of relative deprivation tend to stimulate participation, particularly of the unconventional type" (Grasso et al. 2019: 426). Moreover, "negative economic contexts tend to spur unconventional participation but not conventional activism" (Grasso et al. 2019: 426).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we examined the association between the economy and political participation. Our review of previous work shows that there is much debate, even at a theoretical level, about how economic conditions can have mobilizing or demobilizing effects.

Starting with the connection between the economy and voter turnout, our meta-analysis suggests that, while much heat has been generated in exploring economics and turnout, little light has been shed, in that the findings do not converge on one major hypothesis. However, much depends on whether the glass is seen as half-full or half empty. One could argue, first, that the aggregate studies should carry more water because, after all, the force of democratic policymaking depends on the level of mass turnout in the electorate as a whole. Normatively speaking, we strive for governments that are more accountable which, ceteris paribus, they will be, as more voters participate in rewarding (or punishing) their leaders. This perspective puts the spotlight on assessment of the impact from different macroeconomic variables.

Two observers of economic voting have put the question this way: "What macroeconomic variables count for shaping national election outcomes?" (Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2013: 376). In their pathbreaking work on the V-P function, Nannestad and Paldam (1994) suggested the "big two" variables were unemployment and inflation. Norpoth et al. (1991: 5) contended, in response, that we should "formulate models with economic indicators as global as possible" which points to the growth variable, a general measure used to good effect (see, e.g., Dassonneville and Lewis-Beck 2014).

Focusing on Table 5.2, we see that the GDP growth variable generally yields coefficients supportive of the mobilization hypothesis, namely that low growth increases turnout. Looking at these tests, 84.7 percent produce the expected, negatively signed, estimate. Further, 52.8 percent are statistically significant at 0.05, a proportion that compares favorably to the numbers on unemployment and GDP per capita.

The point need not be pushed further than to suggest a clear path for future research, that will clear the way for more consensus on the connection between economic conditions and voter turnout. In doing so, we think two issues are particularly important for future research to tackle. First, scholars should explore the conditions that have blunted, on occasion, the underlying impact of growth on turnout. One possible culprit could be income inequality, which has been shown recently to have contingent negative effects on turnout (Polacko et al. 2020). Second, our review of the literature clarified that most previous work on the connection between economic conditions and turnout hypothesizes and tests linear effects. As Gomez and Hansford (2015) have argued in their work on economic voting, however, effects need not be linear. They argue that both very bad and very good economic conditions might motivate citizens to turn out to vote, because under such conditions citizens care about politics more. Future research should test this possibility more systematically and move beyond tests of the linear effects of economic conditions on participation.

Research in the area of economics and conventional political behavior, that is, voting turnout, has been more plentiful than that on economics and unconventional political behavior, that is, protest. What can we say about reported results on economics and protest? Overall, they seem scattered. While some aggregate measures show significant effects, others do not. The same could be said for individual-level effects. If we assume the role of Adam Smith's "impartial spectator," can we spot any sorting at all? (Carrasco and Fricke 2016). With respect to the aggregate (country-level) studies, the focus has been on the role of economic development (GDP per capita), but results are very mixed. With respect to the individual-level results, results are mixed as well, though recent studies show statistically significant pocketbook effects, when the retrospection on the household economic situation encompasses the last five years (rather than simply the last year). It would appear, then, that, at least for the countries investigated in these studies, it takes a while for the personal economic hardship to trigger protest behavior. In sum, on the basis of our literature review, some theoretically plausible economic effects on protest emerge, at both the macro- and micro-levels. However, at this stage of analysis, any conclusions must be preliminary and more uncertain than Adam Smith's "impartial observer" might like.

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CHAPTER 6

ANTHROPOLOGY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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The study of political participation in anthropology has engendered a concept of politics that provides for the possibility to examine the constitution of political order and of a polity through diverse and divergent forms of participation. Anthropology has responded to what has been identified as the crisis of contemporary democracy, a post-democratic (Crouch 2005) or even post-political (Rancière 1999) era with an insistence that we are observing an intensely political time (Postero and Elinoff 2019). The analysis of contemporary impossibilities to participate emerging in the neoliberal age has been the subject of many anthropological enquiries into contemporary politics (e.g., Li 2019); they have acknowledged a crisis of formal institutions of democracy in many places, and enquired into their de-politicizing dynamics (Ferguson 1994; Coles 2004; Muehlebach 2012), as well as their employment as instruments of hegemony (Li 2007). Anthropology has treated this observation as a call to take into view the diverse strategies and struggles of people to recuperate participatory possibilities, assert participatory rights, and negotiate and expand the norms that define legitimate participation.

Anthropologists focus on the modes and practices in which people attempt to realize participatory rights, and to deepen or expand the possibilities of participation in situations in which people perceive to have lost participatory possibilities. They have found political participation to rely on diverse forms of practices, including those not usually identified with participation in a political system. They observe how such participatory practices address all sorts of relations of power, not only those with the agencies of government. Moreover, they find such practices of political participation to engage with diverse imaginations of political community, not only those of the nation state or its parts, nor only small-scale local ones, but addressing at times the political order of world society.

For anthropology, political participation could be defined as all action in respect to a political order which lays claim to the promise of taking part in deciding upon one's collective circumstances. There are other forms of relating to a political order than participation: Indifference, dependence, subjection or devotion, all form part of the repertoire of "politics." Some of them also aim at making authorities more respondent to one's needs, and often coexist side by side with participatory forms of relating to authorities. One could argue, furthermore, that most of these ways of relating to political authority entail aspects of participation, an observation much discussed in anthropology, but this is not my focus here. Rather, I will explore those anthropological approaches to political participation that have examined how the promises of political participation capture the imaginations and aspirations of people in the most different circumstances, and which have sought to explore the tension arising between these participatory desires and their ever-failing realization. In these anthropological perspectives, political participation appears to be driven by the attempts to realize its promises; it is a form of voice, an immanent critique, that (re-) creates and criticizes at the same time and is realized only in practice. It is the stuff of politics.

This perspective has moved three questions to the center of anthropological engagements with political participation. First is the question of in what ways people participate politically, and what makes the practices of participating in a political order "political." Anthropologists, who take into account how the political is shaped by economic action, religious belief, or social intimacies (and vice versa), and who have therefore dissolved the boundaries between the private and the public erected by liberal conceptions of politics, pay attention to the ways in which seemingly "non-political" practices are employed as political means; or when overtly political ones change in their meaning, as when electoral experiences are significant not for their impact on electoral outcomes, but for collective identity, self-worth, or a sense of possibility. For anthropologists thus, many forms of participation make "politics": they are quintessentially political in their projective character, seeking to impact on the order of things.

The second question that anthropologists have engaged with when they have discussed political participation in its diverse forms, is, what difference it makes that people do participate—to them, and to the order that they participate in. Anthropologists have debated whether political participation, even in their encompassing understanding, reinforces the hegemonic dynamics of an existing order or can actually effect change. Does participation merely reproduce a political order?

The third question central to anthropological explorations of political participation is who (and what) are subjects of political participation; and, related, how we need to think the constitution of the body politic. Anthropologists have in recent years developed a more processual understanding of the polity, one that reflects the practices of bordering political communities. Thus, anthropologists have explored participatory practices for their expression of "insurgent" norms of legitimate participation. The central question that emerges today is thus that of the relation between participation and membership, that is, the question whether participation is confined to members of a given polity, or whether it is itself constitutive of the polity that one participates in.

In the following, I will explore these three questions, around which anthropological perspectives on political participation have centered. I will begin with the many faces of the political that early political anthropology identified, which necessitated, or rather: enabled an encompassing concept of the political. For subsequent studies this opened up the possibility of a perspective on political participation to be identified in various acts and practices of the everyday. Moving from the observation of "different" practices and norms of participation in non-Western political orders, anthropologists came to take into view the myriad ways of participating in all political orders.

Second, I will focus on the anthropological studies which came to focus on the expressive aspects of participatory practice and the contestations over norms of legitimate participation. This brought to the fore the question of the very constitution of the polity that people participate in. Thirdly, and in order to take up this question on the constitution of the polity through participation, I will turn to the debate on the effects of participation, that is, the question whether political participation merely reproduces a political order or actually transforms it, a question that arises, on the one hand, in relation to the anthropological skepticism towards the possibilities of the subaltern to speak, but equally, on the other hand, in relation to the discipline's presumptions about the prefigurative effects of subaltern projective practice.

The Many Faces of the Political

Political anthropology from the very beginning set out to explore norms and practices of political participation. The early political anthropologists of functionalist or structural functionalist orientation examined the rules which regulated political participation in non-state political systems (e.g., Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940; Leach 1954). They identified the ways that social position and aspects of the person determined participatory forms, rights, and obligations. Examining diverse ways of political participation and the specific conceptualizations of the person that underlay norms of political participation in different political orders produced a sensibility towards conceptualizations of political personhood and the way that shapes political participation. A concept of participation adequate to these diverse norms regulating participation was needed to provide for conceptual possibilities to conceive of political participation not as a right, but also as an obligation, a duty, an aspect of a specific phase of life, or of a specific subject position. Therefore, political anthropology had to employ a notion of politics that was not confined to specific practices or "methods" of participation; nor to an idea of rationality, deliberation, or voluntarism; one, furthermore, not focused on specific addressees of participatory practices or claims, such as "government." Rather, their comparative project attended to the multivalent aspects of politics they found in different political orders. They needed to take into account in their concept of the political how different orders reflected all: the fundamental sociality of being underlying any politics (Pina-Cabral 2018) and the *communitas* of political practice (Turner 1969), as well as the "stratagems and spoils" (Bayley 1969) of political negotiation and maneuvering.

The successors of the early political anthropologists in the 1960s and early 1970s often explored the egalitarian "participatory ethos" that they found in the political norms and institutions of polities without a state (e.g., Barth 1959; Clastres 1974; Sigrist 1967). Some explicitly countered the teleologies of modernization theory. They employed the Boasian assertion of the equal value of diverse cultural forms as a critical instrument for modernity, considering those alternative political institutions as evidence of the possibility of an "otherwise."

For contemporary exploration of political participation from an anthropological perspective taking account of these diverse systems of political participation is thus not a matter of "difference" as such. Rather, the exploration of such different logics of organizing, normatively legitimizing, and understanding political participation necessitated anthropologists to develop a broader concept of political participation that they could employ also for understanding political participation in contemporary liberal democracies and other political systems (e.g., Hage 2015). Observing institutions of political participation that highlighted aspects of social obligation pertaining to people with specific capacities or in specific age groups, or understanding rituals of political participation to enact particular conceptualizations of both the person and the polity, and particularly the relation of both, provided conceptual tools to explore these aspects also in polities organized as democratic states. The holism characteristic of the anthropological endeavor made anthropologists consider the specific delineations of "the political," that is the distinctions that different systems made between what issues and concerns pertained to the realm of the political and which did not. Thus, political anthropology developed a perspective, which paid attention to the polyvalent aspects of different forms of political participation; and which could explore the constitution of specific notions of "the political agent" through institutions of political participation, and, vice versa the constitution of political community through acts, practices, and rituals of participation.

Norms of Legitimate Participation

For anthropology, seeking to trace the expression of political norms and aspirations in such diverse forms of political participation is also a result of the long-standing predominance in the discipline to "study down,"[1] that is, to explore precisely the realities of those whose voices go mostly unheard, and whose normative orientations remain unrepresented. Paying attention to the diverse strivings to participate has been of interest to anthropologists because they are one form in which "the subaltern can speak" (Spivak 1988).

Systemic impossibilities of political participation go far beyond the denial of formal participatory rights. Differential obstacles to participation in relation to class, caste, race, gender, ethnicity, legal status, sexual orientation, "ability," or others, have always been the norm (e.g. Inda 2005; Nuijten and Lorenzo 2009; see also Chapters 33, 34, 35 this volume). The counterpublics (Negt and Kluge 1972; Warner 2002) that form around systemic impossibilities of participation, create the grounds from which people begin to participate, either in order to delineate a space of autonomy, or to claim access and recognition. For anthropologists, thus, political participation appears as a promise that people strive to realize when they feel excluded in whatever way or threatened by political decisions that affect them but that they cannot influence.

When attention moved to the impact of colonialism and imperialism on political institutions, political anthropology focused on the re-definition and re-constitution of political authority that colonialism had effected (e.g., Mamdani 1996) and that shaped post-colonial polities. One form of political participation prominently discussed in political anthropology was patron–client relations and similar arrangements. "Clientelism" was discussed as a form of political participation because it was a predominant form of accessing the political system and the resources of states, particularly in situations shaped by high socioeconomic inequality, where access to the resources and services of states were

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[1] "Studying down" for long replaced studying "the other"; studying up (Nader 1969) and studying "through" (Wedel et al. 2005) have become important but have not informed explorations of political participation. See also Chapter 16 this volume on ethnographic methods.

mediated by "brokers." For "the politics of the governed" (Chatterjee 2004) brokers in state administrations and government authorities might forge particular relations with clients, that are not based on rights but rather on bio-political forms of "assistance" to life, thereby potentially continuing their exclusion from what Chatterjee (2004) called "civil society." There has always been the observation that in many places where people suffer from insufficient infrastructures and services, votes are exchanged for immediate material benefits, be they simply money, or be it electricity connections, the paving of roads, or access to municipal waterpipes. Given the absence of many state provisions for large segments of the population of many states, however, such strategic exchanges of votes for palpable material benefits appear as immediately rational. More importantly, such transactions can be understood as a form of participation in as much as they involve negotiations, in which voters' needs and expectations are articulated to relevant political authorities.

Often it is precisely in people's discourses about states' failures to fulfill people's demands and expectations, such as in talk of corruption (Gupta 1995; Parry 2000), that norms of rights and duties are shaped. Rather than considering such relations mainly as determined by a lack of inclusion into formal institutions of representation, however, anthropologists have analyzed them also for their productive aspects. Harri Englund (2008) and James Ferguson (2013), for example, have both suggested, that we should re-think the (negatively connoted) concept of dependence (on patrons or "the state") as articulations by "dependents" of norms entitling them to care, and attributing an obligation onto their patrons. Thus, relations of dependence can be conceived of as a form of political participation in as much as they are often the site in which norms of obligation are negotiated. As Veena Das (2011) has argued, rights wax and wane, and they are negotiated for in everyday interactions in which people constitute themselves as citizens, articulating their ideas of the state and their relationships to it (see also Das 2011; Gupta 1995; Harriss 2005; Eckert 2011). Such politics of negotiating relations with political authority are not necessarily properly understood when considering them simply as enactments of "traditional" forms of political relations, or as rooted in stable norms of reciprocal obligations. These are forms of political participation. They assert the right and entitlement to what they claim (Eckert 2011), thereby advancing their own understandings of the norms and values that should govern the polity.

It is such attention to the articulations of the norms that should govern political relations in the diverse forms of political participation, which have put the aspirational expressiveness at the center of anthropological analyses of political participation in recent years. Anthropologists studying democracy (see e.g., the contributions in Paley 2008), for example, have often observed the embrace of electoral rights in diverse situations (Edelman 1985; Spencer 2007: 93; Coburn and Larson 2009). Voting, they have found, is valued, because it is the one moment when the promise of equality inherent in democratic ideals becomes real (e.g., Banerjee 2011a; Carswell and de Neve 2014). It is less the idea that one's vote actually has an impact on the future of one's government; rather, it is the enactment of the equality of all through the equality of all votes, which is central to this particular form of political participation. In anthropologists' exploration of voting, the ritual of elections is a symbol of that ever-unfulfilled idea of equality, and a symbolic assertion of its validity. Such an ideal of equality can refer to the individual, but also to a particular community aspiring for greater self-determination and the possibility of having power as a group (Michelutti 2007; Witsoe 2011; see also Chapter 47 this volume). Aspirations to equality are enacted in elections also through the experience of "communitas" that such ritual enables (Banerjee

2011b; see also Chapter 38 this volume). From an anthropological perspective, to speak of elections as "mere" ritual is thus misguided, since it is precisely the ritual that is of significance (Spencer 2007: 77), both as the moment of communitas, and in terms of the expression of political values and norms, of hopes, aspirations, and expectations.

Such expressive aspects have often been studied in relation to the projects of social movements. While anthropology has its own rich literature on social movements (e.g., Edelman 2001; Nash 2005; Susser 2016), it has not confined the exploration of such expressive aspects to these. Rather, anthropologists have analyzed "pre-ideological" (Bayat 2010: 19) everyday struggles for "social citizenship" (e.g., Holston 2007; 2011; Das 2011) and "acts of citizenship" (Isin 2008) for such expressions of goals and desires "unrepresented" and before their articulation within the framework of a particular vision of social and political change. They have assumed the immediate needs of marginalized people to give rise to the articulation of new norms of legitimate participation, evident in multitudinous squatting of urban land (e.g., Bayat 2000), the unregulated construction of homes (e.g., Holston 2007), the assertion of access to public space (e.g., Bayat 2010: 96–114; Göle 2006), and the mass mobilities that demand freedom of movement and the right to "be there" (e.g., De Genova 2009; Mezzadra 2006).

We observe also legal challenges to governmental agencies, international organizations, or multinational corporations (e.g., Eckert 2006; Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito 2006), to be employed for such expressive goals: The "juridification of protest" (Eckert et al. 2012), while often charged with de-politizing at base political struggles (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 2006), is increasingly a means to express political objectives and projects and advance alternative or novel understandings of legal norms (Eckert 2021). These all are ways in which the subaltern not only claim and appropriate access to specific goods, but through which they express their ideas of justice and injustice and formulate norms of legitimate participation.

IMAGINING THE POLITY

Since the social struggles explored by anthropologists are at base about defining the polity in terms of legitimate participation, questions about the constitution of the polity and its boundaries moved center stage. The struggles observed by anthropologists proposed new grounds for claiming membership: People referred to their labor (Eckert 2011), or to their shared humanity (Das 2011). Holston (2011) has pointed to "contributor rights," that particular legitimation of claims based on the labor and consumption of everyday existence that creates the polity in all its circumstance, and that in turn is grounds for participatory rights. The practical claims to participation that redefine the polity express visions of possibilities, ideas of oneself "(and others) as subjects of rights" (Isin 2009, 371) and ways of realizing them. These attempts to define legitimate participation in effect expanded the boundaries of political communities through the participation of people who had but insecure rights and possibilities of formal participation or who were denied them altogether. The central question that emerges for political anthropology today is that of the relation between participation and membership.

Anthropology had had no difficulties in conceptualizing polities without "states" and "acephalous orders" (e.g., Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940; Sigrist 1967). However, it has proven more difficult to leave behind other essentialized notions, such as those of unified cultural communities. While the specific limitations of participatory rights with their discriminations in terms of gender, age, caste, and class were paid attention to, anthropological ideas of membership nonetheless often left unquestioned the processes by which the actual polities of which membership was negotiated, were constituted. Hence, membership and community were not, for a long time, problematized in anthropology: they were often defined by the assumedly given ethnic or kin belonging or national citizenship. The very term "culture," particularly in its plural form "cultures," which anthropology propagated, suggested units integrated by some given commonalities, be that language, history, blood, or even simply the cultural "text" and its collective reading. The critiques of such ideas of a unity of community constituted by "shared culture" began early (e.g., Barth 1969), but methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002) shaped the design of fields for research in anthropology as much as in other social sciences for long (and continues to do so). While systemic limits to participation were thus considered, they were perceived as internal to a given polity, whether exploring membership in national polities or in sub-national communities, anthropologists thus focusing on the impossibility to participate of those who had whatever kind of given membership status.

The fact that practices of participation often seek to define and redefine the very borders of political communities by suggesting alternative grounds for claims to legitimate participatory possibilities, was theorized only when the easy identifications of membership and ascribed identities of national–territorial or ethnic belonging was undermined by the emergence of more processual concepts of culture and identity in anthropology. They paved the way also for more processual approaches to the understanding of belonging and membership, and thus for taking into view the ways in which political participation itself constitutes political communities and their boundaries. Leaving behind seemingly pre-defined notions of a polity that people are members of to participate in, anthropologists have moved towards more pragmatic notions of polity, in the sense of examining the very constitution of political communities through multifarious practices of participation, bordering, "encroachment" (Bayat 2000) and appropriations (Eckert 2015).

Anthropologists have thus found political participation to articulate diverse imaginations of political community, often unaligned with jurisdictional boundaries, sometimes more expansive than membership in an "imagined community" of a nation-state, and operating across multiple scales such as the local, transnational, and transversal (see Holston 2019; Çağlar and Glick Schiller 2018; for the transnational see also Chapter 50 this volume). Anthropologists have in recent years addressed more centrally also the ways in which polities have been conceptualized "otherwise," paying attention particularly to more egalitarian and participatory forms, and those polities that in their institutions reflect human and non-human cohabitation in the Anthropocene (Blaser 2019; Youatt 2020). They thus not only appropriate existing notions of membership in some form of pre-constituted collectivity, but radically rework ideas of membership (McNevin et al. 2021).

Political participation then is about being effective in shaping one's own circumstances in relation to others one is connected to through the multifarious entanglements of existence in our contemporary world. A "politics of presence" in a particular locality—the sheer fact of being there—carries a conceptualization of participatory rights that are currently tried out in those initiatives that experiment with "urban citizenship" (e.g., Glick Schiller and Çağlar

2009; Hess and Lebuhn 2014). They conceive of participatory rights as arising from coexistence or cohabitation in a locality or within a particular social situation.

Focusing on the diverse forms of political participation that people engage in thus makes it possible to conceive of a polity, not as already constituted by an apparatus of institutions that distinguishes between members and non-members, but as actually always created by politics, that is, greater or lesser degrees of participation. This Arendtian conception of politics as participation (Arendt 1993: 15), that is, the very definition of politics as participation, enables us to rethink political participation in a manner that overcomes the methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002) inherent in conceptions of polity as a pre-constituted collectivity. Unlike Arendt, who upheld a specific delineation between the public and the private founded in Greek political theory, politics therein residing exclusively in the public, and taking only specific forms considered appropriate and civil, anthropology, with its holistic attention to the myriad ways the political takes expression in the seemingly non-political, overcomes both the division between the public and the private, and the exclusion of some forms of political expression from what is (conceptually) admitted to the realm of the political. Anthropologists can thus contribute to a nuanced perspective on the actual processes of drawing such distinctions and delineating both the political and the polity.

BEYOND HEGEMONY: THE EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION

Anthropologists differed as to the question what difference it makes that people do participate—to them, and to the order that they participate in. They have been skeptical towards the potential of political participation to actually build and shape state institutions, and the institution building capacities of political participation have mostly been observed in relation to the development of institutions alternative to established ones. Many considered participation (also) a form of obedience to the order people were scrambling to participate in, a form of disciplinary method that brought people to strive for what reproduces the order of things, a means of hegemony, or of ideology (Edelman 1985).

The suggestion inherent in Rancière's proposition that all forms of "successful participation" are already incorporated into the realm of "police," "politics" residing in rupture rather than participation, points us to the question in how far participation is obedient to the constraints a political system imposes on it, and thus actually potentially effective in shaping that very system. Anthropologists have often considered the formation of subjectivities through the governmental colonization of minds and bodies (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1991), the effect of state categories and classifications (e.g., Mitchell 1999; Collier et al. 1995). Following a pessimistic reading of Bourdieu's notion of habitus and Michel Foucault's notion of subjectivation, the discipline has paid attention to how social orders are reproduced through practice shaped by the habitual dispositions of agents, the mimetic elements (Gupta and Sharma 2006), and the bio-political governmentality articulated in democratic participation (Li 2007). Particularly, anthropologists studying the participatory standards in development "cooperation" and their rhetoric of "ownership," have dissected such obligations to participate as a method of hegemony, a disciplinary tool that trains people into the desires and goals, procedures, and norms of a political order (Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Li 2007).

Anthropologists have thus considered obedience in relation to political orders and the ways they are reproduced through people actively—intentionally or inadvertently—obeying their rules. A particularly precise study of such political participation is Emma Tarlo's, who, in her ethnography of the emergency rule of the government of Indira Gandhi in India from 1973 to 1975, examined how state oppression was perpetuated by the active participation by many of those targeted by various programs (Tarlo 2003). Obedience is thus an important form of participation, the striving of the marginalized to be part of the system of marginalization proving the latter's hegemonic force. It has often been the very unfulfillment of the normative promises of a political system that are the driving force of claims and demands for political inclusion; they are ubiquitous as the universalist claims of most modern orders have nowhere fulfilled their promises to all they promised participation (Holston 2007; Ong 2005). In short, any striving for inclusion indicates a valuation of the goods that the status quo could offer if one were included in it in a more privileged position, and thus also a limit to the political imagination.

However, anthropologists have equally observed how precisely the limits imposed triggered the political imagination for an "otherwise." Despite the frequent reading of Bourdieu as deterministic, his practice theoretical position also enabled anthropologists to examine the "break with the doxa" (1985: 734) and to explore the struggles between agents to impose their worldview by the "work of representation": "The truth of the social world is the stake in struggle between agents very unequally equipped to achieve absolute, i.e. self-fulfilling, vision and forecasting" (Bourdieu 1985: 732). In his text on social space and the genesis of groups (1985), Bourdieu insists that we have "to integrate the agents' representation of the social world; more precisely [we] must take account of the contribution that agents make towards constructing the view of the social world, and through this, towards constructing this world (…)" (Bourdieu 1985: 727). While subaltern visions of political participation are often shaped by the aspirations founded in the very legitimating grounds that a political order entails, these promises are interpreted in ways that mesh moral or ethical and future imaginations possibly stemming from realms other than the dominant normative order. Interpretations of norms and of practices contain projects that are socially situated, grounded in past experience, the myths and rumors (Hansen and Stepputat 2006, 296) about the state as well as by normative assumptions about what ought to be.

Attention to this interpretative and representational work has elucidated the creative and innovative use of existing political institutions that people engage in. They are creative in as much as they put forth specific interpretations of norms and act upon them in order to shape institutions accordingly. Isin, for example, sees "acts of citizenship" precisely in those actions that break with habitual practice, and allow for new norms to be enacted, distinguishing "between justice and injustice, between equal and unequal and between fair and unfair" (Isin 2012: 123). In this light, struggles for political participation could be considered a form of prefigurative politics in the sense of David Graeber, who argued that "the structure of one's own act becomes a kind of microutopia, a concrete model for one's vision of a free society" (2009: 210).

The corrosion of the status quo that often goes along with its partial affirmation in the practices of participation that anthropologists have studied often lies in incremental transformations. (See also Chapter 46 this volume.) It consists first and foremost in slow and sometimes contradictory changes of the norms of what is "normal." The slow and small transformations in the ideas about the acceptable and the right way of governing can add up to rather substantive changes in the relations of domination. These practices and forms of action constitute social change: They "succeed" when they affect what is considered "normal," "standard," and legitimate practice, or even shift the line between legal and illegal.

In their attention to such "prefigurative" dimensions of participatory practice, anthropologists, however, have often neglected theoretical reflection on the "political neutrality" of a concept of prefigurative politics. Examining how participatory practices re-define the boundaries of polities, for example, needs to take into view all those struggles that strive for a prerogative of participatory rights, and seek to define polities in more narrow ways. Participatory rights are rights to membership in a polity, and such rights are more often than not asserted as the prerogative of specific identity groups. The "politics of the public square" (Graeber 2013) can enact all sorts of imaginations of polities. There, in the gathering, a self-constitution of "we, the people's" (Butler 2015) claims to be legitimate members have more often than not turned into claims to be more legitimate than others, and to exclude those others who are not deemed to be "the people." Nationalist and fascist mobilisation build precisely on the concomitance of participatory promises and exclusion of "others" (Eckert 2003).

Popular political participation can take the form of the "mob" (Tazzioli et al. 2021) and it is fascist politics that has often reverted to a politics of "direct action" and thereby provided (and provides) possibilities for public action and political participation, claiming public space through violent confrontations (Eckert 2003). Such aspects of prefiguration within political participation appear as particularly relevant and worthy of attention in times of a perceived crisis of political participation (see Giugni and Grasso 2019). Hence, attention to participatory prefigurations does not lead inevitably to a theory of democratization. (Unfortunately), the end to which political participation is put is open.

CONCLUSION

Precisely because anthropologists consider the political dimension of many of the practices, acts, rituals, and relations they study, there is no unified position on political participation in anthropology, not even an integrated debate on it. The one position anthropologists would probably share is that if one wants to enquire into political participation in any way, be that in relation to its effects on a political order, be that into its reverberations in "the private," insights can be found in all fields of existence.

From identifying different forms of organizing participation in non-Western political systems, anthropology moved to analyzing the multivarious forms of participating they observed in the everyday; from studying the norms regulating how different subject positions determined legitimate participation, anthropologists came to study how different subject positions were differently restricted to participate—and how they struggled to overcome these impediments. The attention to the diverse but specific limits of and exclusions from political participation, when freed from its structural functionalist underpinnings, engendered attention to the multifarious ways in which those excluded or hindered from participation strove to overcome such limitations, and produced relations to political authorities beyond those formally instituted.

These shifts in perspective from studying plurality, to studying inequality so to say, or: the concatenation of plurality and inequality (Eckert 2016) provided for the possibility of anthropology to perceive the many ways of political participation, from the extraordinary in "acts of citizenship" to the everyday negotiations of membership. The focus on the struggles to overcome impediments to participation, to realize, expand, or deepen one's participatory possibilities were analyzed as to their constitutive role of the political order in question. Thus, thirdly, anthropologists came to conceive of the polity as constituted (and delineated) by participatory practice. The attention to diverse forms of participation, and particularly those practices that strive to overcome forms of exclusion from the polity, be they ideological, legal, economic, or other, necessitates for anthropology a concept of political participation that considers it to come before membership, yes, to constitute membership. This has also opened the way in recent years for new notions of the polity: as constituted by the participatory practices of those present. Political anthropology thus, from studying mostly non-state polities, but with a largely unreflected notion of the constitution of political community, and through studying myriad ways of participating politically, has moved to radically different concepts of both politics (Postero and Elinoff 2019) and the polity (McNevin et al. 2021), which leave behind the methodological nationalism of earlier, and consider participation as constitutive of political community. In fact, in the anthropological perspective on political participation, politics comes to be tantamount to participation, and the polity can be perceived as delineated by diverse participatory struggles.

This "prefigurative" perspective has had a slant, often overlooking those movements that struggled to narrow participatory possibilities to a specific group, or to limit the role of participation. Notwithstanding this bias, the anthropological perspective can enrich a tradition of theorizing the polity as constituted and delineated by participation. The question whether and how political participation is transformative of a political order, redefining political institutions, can then enquire into the differential possibilities of diverse practices to initiate processes of change. This is the contribution of anthropology.

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CHAPTER 7

GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

CHARLES J. PATTIE

AS a showcase of political participation, the 2020 US presidential election season took some beating. In a highly partisan and polarized contest, electoral turnout rose to 66.8 percent of the eligible voting population, on some estimates its highest level since 1900.[1] Citizens campaigned for their preferred candidates, displayed posters, discussed the election with friends, families, workmates, and relative strangers, and many joined in various protests and rallies. Some took part in demonstrations which occasionally veered into illegality—with the events sparked by the Stop the Steal rally on January 6, 2021, in Washington DC as perhaps the most egregious example.

There were clear and striking geographies to that participation. While both the numbers and the proportions voting rose in almost every part of the country, turnout was not the same everywhere. It varied substantially between states (from 80% of eligible voters in Minnesota to just 55% in Oklahoma) and even more between Congressional districts and between counties.

The election infrastructure also created geographies of participation. Arrangements for voting varied substantially across the country. In response to the COVID pandemic, many states took steps to make mail-in voting much easier, and provided more facilities at which voters could drop in already-completed ballots. But most voters still turned out in person to vote. In many areas, long lines formed at polling stations, even for early voting. This was exacerbated in some states by reductions in the number of polling stations available, meaning more voters had to attend fewer locations (often further from their homes). That, too, had its own geography, linked to which party controlled the state government. Many Democrat-controlled states eased controls, while many Republican ones made voting harder.

Other political activities related to the election were also affected by geography. Symbolic locations were (as they often are) the focus for symbolic actions. In the months before the election, several State Houses were the foci of protests over a variety of issues, including perceived threats to Second Amendment rights and State authorities' COVID lockdown measures. And the iconography of holding the January 6 Stop the Steal protest on the National Mall was clear, as was the symbolism of marching on and forcibly entering the Capitol. In all these forms of political participation, place mattered.

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[1] Data from the United States Elections Project, last updated December 7, 2020: http://www.electproject.org/2020g.

This chapter elaborates on this by examining how the insights offered by the study of geography help us understand political participation. As a subject, geography is concerned with where things happen. This is not simply a matter of pure locational description: each place provides a unique combination of factors coming together in the same site, creating something which is larger than the sum of the individual parts. People are influenced not only by their own circumstances, but by their surrounding geographical contexts. While there is not a large tradition of research in political participation among academic geographers (though some do work in that area), the ideas and concepts underpinning the discipline do resonate with and inform work on the subject by scholars in other disciplines. What is the geography of political participation? How does it relate to other political, social, and economic geographies? How do citizens' social contexts affect their participation, and how are those contexts shaped geographically? And what role does geography play in the mobilization of participation?

Mapping Political Participation

All political participation takes place somewhere. And where citizens are can influence how likely they are to participate. Many forms of political engagement are catalyzed by local events and issues. For instance, policy decisions may affect some areas more than others. People in the affected areas may be more likely to engage in political action (whether to oppose unwelcome proposals or to support more desirable ones) than are people in more distant, less affected places. And even when it comes to national political events, such as general elections, participation can and does vary significantly from place to place. There is a distinct geography of turnout in most democracies.

Strikingly, that geography of electoral participation is often very stable. The very strong positive correlation ($r = 0.926$) between constituency turnout at the 2017 and 2019 British general elections illustrates the point (Figure 7.1). Nor is this limited to the UK. There are strong and persistent geographies of turnout in many other countries. To take one example, analyses of county-level turnout in US presidential elections shows persistently high levels of positive spatial autocorrelation. Areas where turnout is high tend to be surrounded by other high turnout areas, while low turnout counties tend to have low turnout neighbors (Darmofal 2006).

What might account for these variations in electoral participation? To some degree, turnout (and other forms of participation) can be affected by brute physical geography. Electoral folk wisdom suggests that bad weather on polling day depresses turnout, as rational voters, knowing their personal participation is exceptionally unlikely to sway the election result, opt to stay at home rather than face the inclement conditions in order to vote. While the weather may be rather unpredictable, it can and does vary from place to place, and on any given election day, the sun can be shining in some areas while other areas experience rain (or worse). And it seems there is substance to the folk wisdom. Analyses of

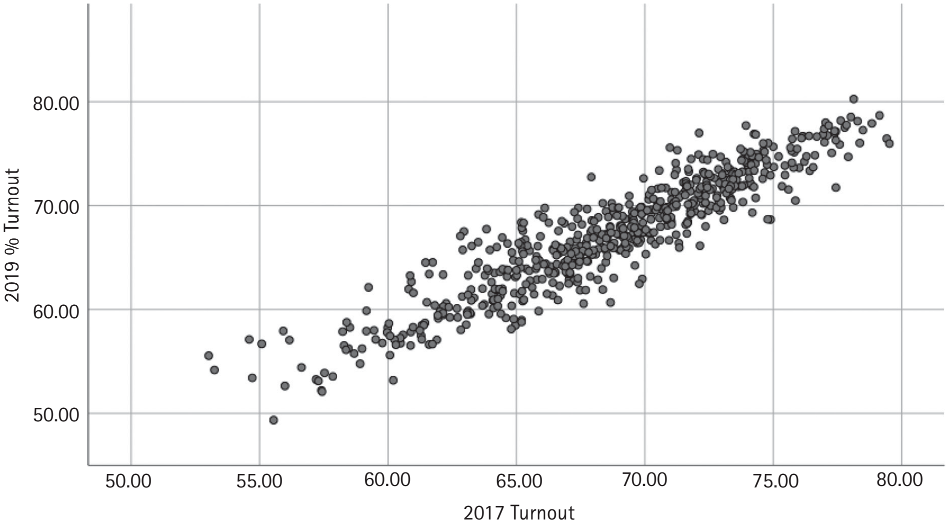

FIGURE 7.1 Constituency turnout at the 2017 and 2019 UK General Elections

Note: Constituencies in Northern Ireland and the Speaker's constituency are omitted from the figure.

the effects of local weather conditions on the geography of election turnout in a variety of countries (including France, the Netherlands, Ireland, and the USA) have found that where it rained, turnout went down somewhat, but warmer, sunnier conditions locally were associated with higher turnout levels (Lakdhar and Dubois 2006; Eisinga, Grotenhuis, and Pelzer, 2012; Garcia-Rodriguez and Redmond 2020; Knack 1994). That said, the effect was neither large nor strong—and several studies have found no clear effect (see e.g., Persson, Sundell and Öhrvall 2014; Mughan 1986).

Whatever the real effect of climatic conditions on electoral participation, however, weather is a largely random and uncontrollable factor. Other "gross" geographical influences are much more politically malleable (for good or ill). In-person voting at designated local polling stations is still very much the norm in most electoral systems, and that can affect participation, especially where alternative means of voting, such as mail ballots, are either unavailable or only available in exceptional circumstances. How accessible polling stations are for voters can affect whether they turn out. Travel to the polling station is a cost. Not all voters have the time, the good health, or the access to transport needed to make the trip an easy one. And, in line with rational choice expectations, as the costs associated with accessing the polling station increase, the odds of voting are liable to go down. Numerous studies—from countries like Britain, the USA, Denmark, and Canada—confirm this. Other things being equal, the further voters live from their nearest polling station, the less likely they are to vote (Clinton et al. 2020; Bhatti 2012; Orford et al. 2008; Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003; Garnett and Grogan 2021). And, where drop boxes are used to collect ballots, voters are more likely to use proximate than distant drop boxes (Collinwood and O'Brien 2021).

The effects of distance to polling location on turnout are, however, neither simply linear nor evenly spread across the electorate. Several studies report non-linear trends, with the depressing effect of distance on turnout declining as travel times to polling locations increase (see, for example, Garnett and Grogan, 2021). At longer distances, turnout can even start to increase again. A study of turnout in three Maryland counties found that, other things being equal, the costs of distance and the decline in turnout were greatest in urban precincts which were around two to five miles from their nearest polling location (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2003). But turnout was, on average, slightly higher in rural precincts with longer journeys to the nearest polling location—a finding attributed to easier commuting on less congested rural roads.

Unlike the weather, polling stations' accessibility can be manipulated. If the wish is to increase turnout, the density of polling stations can be increased, reducing average distances to nearest polling station (or all-mail balloting can be introduced, substantially reducing the friction of distance: Richey 2008). But cutting the number of polling stations available in an area risks reducing turnout—especially among voters, often the more marginalized, whose participation is less certain. Both strategies are also open to partisan manipulation, depending on who controls decisions over commissioning polling stations, and whether they calculate that higher or lower turnout is likely to be their advantage (either by increasing the likelihood of their own supporters voting, or by suppressing the vote for rival parties).

In the run-up to the 2020 presidential election, access to polling stations became a major issue in many parts of the USA, amid accusations (mainly from Democrats) that Republican legislators were deliberately reducing the number of polling stations available in Democrat areas. As noted at the start of the chapter, such tactics resulted in very long lines of voters queuing outside polling stations in many areas. In practice, however, the overall depressing effect on turnout was almost certainly partially offset in the 2020 contest by extensive use of early voting and easier mailing voting in many states (e.g., Clinton et al. 2020).

Socioeconomic Geographies of Participation

While the physical environment has some effect on who, and how many, participate, however, it is not the only, or even the main, influence on the geography of participation. Political, social, and economic factors are far more influential. We can usefully differentiate their effects into compositional and contextual processes (Thrift 1983; Johnston and Pattie 2006). Compositional processes are largely driven by the varying social composition of different communities. Individuals' propensity to participate in politics (or to do other things) are influenced by their personal characteristics—their age, occupation, education, and so on. A compositional geography of participation is created when these individual influences also exhibit a geography—as, for instance, when localities are differentiated on lines of wealth or ethnicity. Contextual effects, meanwhile, are derived from the geographical context itself: individuals are influenced not only by their own characteristics and circumstances, but also by the wider environment within which they live—their families, neighborhoods, workplaces, and so on. This section considers evidence for compositional effects on the geography of participation, while the next section examines contextual effects.

As discussed in other chapters, a key finding of the research into the correlates of individual political participation is that the resource-rich are more likely to take part than the resource-poor (see e.g., Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Parry, Moyser, and Day 1992: Pattie, Seyd, and Whiteley 2004; Whiteley 2011). Other things being equal, affluent middle-class university graduates are more likely to engage in most (but not necessarily all) forms of political participation than are less affluent, working-class people with fewer formal qualifications. Money, class, and education lubricate participation.

In most modern societies, money, class, and education also influence where people live. While some areas prosper economically, others are dominated by declining industries (Lloyd 2016; Storper 2018). The implications for local labor markets are profound. World cities like New York, London, and Paris provide very well-rewarded employment for high-flying middle-class graduates (Beaverstock and Hall, 2012; Florida and Mellander 2018). But in communities like the smaller industrial cities of Britain or the United States' "rustbelt," economic prospects are less promising and well-remunerated jobs are fewer and further between. These processes of socioeconomic differentiation are repeated at more local, intra-urban, scales too, further sorting individuals into relatively socially, economically, and politically internally homogenous communities (Bishop and Cushing 2008; Owens 2019).

By shaping the socioeconomic composition of communities, geographical sorting also contributes to a geography of political participation. Some communities are disproportionately comprised of individuals from groups (the less affluent, the less formally educated, the more economically marginalized) who are less likely to participate in most forms of politics. Others (the haunts of affluent middle-class graduates, for instance) are disproportionately made up of residents who are generally more likely to participate.

Electoral turnout once again illustrates the point. Across a range of different countries and elections, turnout generally tends to be highest in more affluent communities, and lower in less affluent and more marginalized ones (e.g. Hill and Leighley 1999; Johnston and Pattie 2006; Mansley and Demšar 2015; Denver 2020; Stadlmair 2020). For instance, constituency turnout levels in Britain's 2019 general election correlate quite strongly with a number of measures of local socioeconomic conditions (Table 7.1: all correlations exclude constituencies in Northern Ireland, and the constituency of the House of Commons Speaker, and all are statistically significant at $p<0.01$). The higher the proportion of local workers in middle-class

Table 7.1 The Socioeconomic Correlates of Constituency Turnout at the 2019 British General Election

Variable	Correlation (r) with % turnout 2019
% employed in professional/managerial occupations: 2011 Census	0.781
% employed in routine occupations: 2011 Census	–0.692
% home owners: 2011 Census	0.462
% renting home: 2011 Census	–0.474
% households with no car: 2011 Census	–0.527
% with degree-level qualifications: 2011 Census	0.638
% with no formal educational qualifications: 2011 Census	–0.694
% aged 65 and over: 2011 Census	0.359
% aged 18-29: 2011 Census	–0.339
% claiming unemployment benefit, September 2019	–0.749

managerial and professional occupations at the 2011 Census, the higher the turnout there in 2019 (by and large, the social geography of the UK did not change radically between 2011 and 2019, so the 2011 Census, the most recent available at the time of writing, is a good indicator for most things). Turnout was also higher in areas where a greater proportion of households were owned by the occupants. The higher the proportion of university graduates living in an area, the higher the proportions voting. And the proportion of the population aged over 65 was also positively associated with turnout. The negative correlates of turnout (the proportion working in "routine" working-class occupations, the proportion renting their home, the proportion with no formal qualifications, the proportion of households owning no car, and the proportion of workers in an area claiming state benefits in September 2019, on the eve of the election) tell the same story from the opposite perspective: the fewer socioeconomic resources residents of a community had, the lower electoral participation there.

The compositional effect extends to other marginalized groups in society with low participation rates and spatially concentrated distributions. In the USA and the UK, for instance, turnout is often lower among Black and Minority Ethnic voters—and hence in the communities and districts with high concentrations of BAME citizens (Hill and Leighley 1999).

Other, largely compositional, features of local communities can also have an effect on participation. For instance, inner urban areas with dynamic and rapidly changing populations often exhibit lower-than-expected participation in elections (e.g. Geys 2006; Hoffman and Lazaridis 2013). Where there are high levels of population turnover, many individuals move house frequently. For some, this may mean they drop off the electoral register. Others might not be "in place" to vote when an election occurs (and unless they have had the foresight to organize postal voting where that is possible, may not be able to vote). Yet others, because of the transient nature of their residence in an area, may not feel sufficiently committed to the area to vote in elections there.

Friends, Neighbors, and the Contextual Geography of Participation

From the compositional perspective, therefore, where participation is more (less) likely to take place reflects in part the sorts of people living there, and the likelihood that the groups they belong to will participate. To that extent, there is a geography of participation, but not a geography of the underlying behavior, as the influences on participation are the same everywhere. But this is not the whole story: some communities poor in resources are relatively rich in participation, and vice-versa. The compositional geography of socioeconomic conditions cannot fully explain the geography of participation (Lowndes et al. 2006). Context matters: there is a geography of behavior as well as one of participation. When deciding on whether (and how) to participate politically, people are influenced by local events and circumstances, and by the views and actions of those they live among.

To some extent, these contextual variations reflect geographical variations in the opportunities and reasons for political engagement. Protests against hospital closures, for instance, are liable to be most intense in those communities directly served by the hospitals under threat (e.g., Brown 2003). Plans for the location of noxious or undesirable facilities are most likely to generate active opposition in those communities most closely affected by the proposal, as local residents try to protect local amenities—a process often (and generally pejoratively, though simplistically) referred to as the NIMBY (not in my back yard) syndrome (e.g., Kemp 1990; Gibson 2005).

A very clear example is provided by the geography of the (highly politicized) strike in the UK's coal mining industry in the mid-1980s (Sunley 1990; Griffiths and Johnston 1991). The strike pitted the National Union of Mineworkers against the Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher, in a dispute over threats of colliery closures (though it also involved very different views of British politics and society).

Participation in the strike followed a very clear geographical "opportunity structure" reflecting the geography of the UK's coalfields. The coalfield communities were strongly working class in nature, and at the heart of the strike were concerns over livelihoods and the long-term viability of the communities themselves. It was there, too, that a substantial "Coalfields Communities" campaign took root, drawing in other local people, not least women, many of whom were partners of striking miners (Beal 2005). Similar "opportunity structures" have guided the geography of other strikes elsewhere (Stillerman 2003; Smith 2015; Nowak 2016).

The UK's 1984–85 miners' strike reveals a further dimension in understanding the geography of political participation: the importance of (often long-standing) local political and social cultures. Participation in, and support for, the strike was very strong in some coalfield areas, but very limited in others. To take two examples, while the Yorkshire coalfield was one of the most militant, in the Nottinghamshire field just to the south, most miners opposed the strike and carried on working. Almost exactly the same geography of relative militancy and moderation were evident 60 years previously, during the mining strike which precipitated (and outlasted) the General Strike of 1926 (Sunley 1990). Underlying factors included different modalities of union organization in different coalfields, different working practices, and different relations (pre-nationalization) between mine owners and workers (Griffiths and Johnston 1991). Local cultures and norms of political behavior varied from place to place, even within ostensibly similar communities, and persisted across generations. People took their cues from what happened around them—how others in their communities and networks thought and acted, and what was seen as "acceptable" in terms of engagement.

Contextual effects which encourage or discourage participation arise from interactions between people. The more people interact with a wide range of others, the more likely they are to develop a sense that strangers can generally be trusted, and from that, the more likely they become to participate in a range of political activities (Putnam 1993, 2000). Those interactions can be formal or informal, long-established or relatively fleeting, so long as they involve encountering a diverse range of others, building "bridging" social capital. Much of that interaction takes place within individuals' local social networks (Lake and Huckfeldt 1998; Krishna 2002). And patterns of sociability and involvement in communities vary both over time and over space. In a now-classic analysis, Putnam (1993) showed that substantial regional and local variations in sociability and community participation across Italy had knock-on consequences for the geography of trust and political participation. Where individuals were involved in extensive networks of association, political participation was also relatively high; where they were less engaged with others, participation fell (a finding replicated in many other contexts: see for example, Carreras and Bowler 2019). Crucially, the positive benefits of bridging social capital are not limited only to those individuals who themselves engage in local community activities, but extend to others in the community: where social capital is stronger, so the probability of participation goes up, both for those active in the community and for those who are not active. There is a clear contextual effect, operating both directly through individuals' contacts with others, and indirectly through wider effects on the local climate of opinion.

Both the direct and indirect routes through which contextual effects can work have been traced at a variety of geographical scales. At perhaps the most intimate of political contexts, there is ample evidence of individuals' decisions on whether (and how) to participate in politics being influenced by the views and actions of their fellow household members. Political socialization within families clearly plays a part here (Zuckerman et al. 2007; Neundorf and Smets 2017). Politically active parents tend to have politically active children—and younger household members are particularly sensitive to how much other household members participate in politics (Fieldhouse and Cutts 2012). Nor are these simple family effects. Cohabitation (including in multiple occupancy homes containing several otherwise unrelated adults) provides a context which can foster or thwart political participation. The more other adults in one's household participate politically, the more likely one is to do so too (Johnston et al. 2005; Cutts and Fieldhouse 2009; Fieldhouse and Cutts 2012, 2018; Buton et al., 2012).

But are these genuine household-level contextual effects, or are they the result of homophilic sorting in household selection? People who choose to live together often opt to live with others who share their lifestyles and outlooks (McPherson et al. 2001). We could, after all, simply be picking up the propensity for those who enjoy engaging in political action to seek out other politically active individuals to live with, and for those who would rather avoid political participation to find similarly like-minded co-habitees.

Controlling for shared social backgrounds among household members, there does still seem to be an independent (and substantial) household effect on political participation (see, for example, Cutts and Fieldhouse 2009). Even so, the possibility remains that political participation itself might be a distinctive basis for homophilic sorting into households: statistical controls alone do not resolve the issue. Carefully designed experimental studies can, however, offer insight. In a get-out-the-vote experiment, Nickerson (2008) targeted two-person households. A canvasser knocked on each household's door and offered the adult who answered either a leaflet encouraging them to vote or one promoting recycling. Which leaflet the individual received was decided at random. The other adult in the household was not contacted by the research team. Post-election analysis of the household members' turnout showed both that receiving the "get out the vote" message boosted the participation of the person answering the door to the canvasser, and also raised the chances that the other adult in the household would also vote. Indeed, Nickerson estimates that almost two-thirds of the get-out-the-vote effect was passed on to the second household member, suggesting an important contagion effect, and intra-household influence on participation. Homophily is clearly an issue, therefore, but it is not the whole story.

What is more, household effects on participation can interact with the wider local context. Members of politically homogeneous households (where all adults share the same political outlook) reinforce each other's participation (Bélanger and Eagles 2007). But this effect seems to be strongest where the household is in the political minority locally. Other things being equal, it seems those who are in a minority locally risk being discouraged from participating, but the reinforcement of living with a like-minded partner can help offset this (see also McClurg 2006).

Blais et al. (2019) examine whether the contextual influence of family, household, and friends operates mainly through what they describe as "injunctive" channels (that is, from being on the receiving end of direct exhortations to get involved), or from more "descriptive" ones (i.e., being influenced by the example of others' behavior). On the whole, their analysis suggests descriptive influences loom larger—and it is particularly the example of others in one's household that matters. Even so, injunctive pressures matter too (Fieldhouse and Cutts 2020): being told one should (or should not) participate by those close to one does make a difference.

That said, while the friends and family provide a powerful (often, the most powerful) contextual influence on participation, it is not the only one. The actions and beliefs (real and perceived) of other members of the local community (including strangers) can also be influential. Here, we shift from direct contextual effects to more indirect influences. Knowledge and expectations of what others in the local community are liable to do and will think is "normal" behavior regarding political participation can have an influence on individuals' own decisions of whether to take part (Pattie and Johnston 2013).

A sense of what others in the community think and do politically is based on the actual experience of those communities. Analyses of political conversation networks between citizens which examine where discussants live tend to find that, on average, people live quite close to their discussion partners—most often within just a few miles (Baybeck and Huckfeldt 2002; Eagles et al. 2004). Cues regarding the local political context are liable to be taken from nonverbal and observational experiences too (e.g., Mutz 1998). Are there visible signs of political participation locally (perhaps campaign posters, canvass activity, high turnout in elections, visible campaigns over local issues, and so on)? Or is there little or no visible activity in the local community? Do casual acquaintances express their political views and declare an interest in taking part themselves—or do they express the view that participation is a waste of time? All of these cues can (and are) picked up by people as they go about their daily lives, and help them develop a sense of the local political context.

Individuals' chances of participating in a wide range of forms of political action are influenced by whether they think other people in their networks and communities think participation is worthwhile. Other things being equal, the greater their perception that others in the community think participation is a valuable activity, the more likely they are themselves to participate—though the effect of perceived community norms is stronger for those who are themselves less politically engaged than for individuals with a strong personal interest in politics (Pattie and Johnston 2013: 187).

Experimental get-out-the-vote studies, which manipulate the information participants receive about levels of political activity in their communities, report similar effects (see e.g., Green and Gerber 2004; Gerber et al. 2008, 2010; Panagopoulos 2010). Other things being equal, individuals who receive messages encouraging them to vote are more likely to do so than are individuals who receive no such message). But individuals who are not only exhorted to vote but who are also told that many other people in the locality are voting are even more likely to turn out.

The evidence is clear: particularly where people are themselves otherwise less inclined to participate politically, the influence of others locally can be very important, whether directly or indirectly. Being surrounded by politically active family members, friends, or communities can increase one's own chances of taking part, whether because of positive persuasion, or because people feel ashamed of not following perceived family and local norms. What is more, there is evidence that such effects can prove long lasting (Davenport et al. 2010): people hold on to that sense of the local context for participation, and it influences their behavior into the future.

The Geography of Mobilization

The experimental studies discussed in the previous section highlight two other key contextual factors influencing the geography of political participation: political mobilization and campaigning. Classic rational choice accounts of collective action suggest that fully rational citizens will not participate politically, as the chances their personal involvement will prove decisive are generally vanishingly small (Downs 1957; Olson 1965). Few citizens are quite so rational. But there is evidence that people are more likely to participate when the probable outcome of a political decision is finely balanced between competing options than where it is largely a foregone conclusion. Participation is lower in socially and economically homogenous local authorities, where there is widespread political agreement, than in very heterogenous authorities where there is considerable disagreement and which party will control the local government hangs in the balance (Oliver 2001).

Once again, electoral turnout illustrates how this might affect participation. The logic is particularly clear in constituency-based plurality electoral systems, where the geography of party support means that some electoral districts are highly competitive between parties, while others are much less so. Under such conditions, variations in constituency marginality create variations in the contextual incentives to vote. The more marginal the constituency, other things being equal, the less certain the result, and hence the greater the incentive to participate in the election in order to maximize the chances of one's preferred candidate winning. But in safer seats, that incentive to participate falls, as many potential votes are liable to be wasted. Supporters of the likely local winner will gain a congenial representative whether they vote or not. Once their preferred candidate has achieved a plurality of the votes locally, any extra votes for the candidate are surplus to requirement, and hence wasted. So, supporters of the locally dominant party in safe seats might reasonably decide to stay home, secure in the knowledge that their candidate will win anyway. Supporters of rival parties in such areas, meanwhile, have little realistic chance of their preferred outcome and so might decide turning out to vote in a locally lost cause is not worth the aggravation: their vote, should they cast it, would be wasted too as it would do nothing to increase their party's representation. Under plurality conditions (but not so much in more proportional electoral systems, where fewer votes are wasted: Stockemer 2015), therefore, the geography of electoral turnout might be expected to follow the geography of constituency marginality, because more potential votes are wasted in safer than in more marginal seats.

And so it often proves. Numerous studies have found reasonably strong negative correlations between the majority of the winning party in a constituency at one election and the turnout there at the next in plurality contests (Denver and Hands 1974, 1985; Denver, Hands and McAllister 2003; Pattie and Johnston 1998a; Gilliam 1985; Jou 2010; Geys, 2006; Fauvelle-Aymar, and François 2006; Stockemer 2015). The bigger the gap between the winning party in a seat and its nearest rival at one election (and hence the smaller the chance of the rival party unseating the incumbent), the lower the turnout in the seat at the following election. As implied in the preceding discussion, most aggregate studies measure how competitive local races are using information on constituency marginality at the preceding election.

Even so, the relationship between marginality and turnout in plurality elections is neither steady nor always visible. In some contests, the link can be quite strong; at others it can be much weaker or even non-existent (Pattie and Johnston 2005). And the aggregate correlation between closeness and participation is not always replicated at the level of individual voters (e.g., Matsusaka 1993; Matusaka and Palda 1993; Pattie and Johnston 1998b; 2005).

In fact, the perceived competitiveness of a local contest may matter more than "objective" measures (Pattie and Johnston 2005). The effect of periodic redistricting of constituency boundaries on turnout illustrates the point. In any redistricting, some electoral districts might be changed very substantially while others hardly alter. We might expect this to affect turnout. Voters in highly disrupted areas lose both easy information on competitiveness from past elections and may also feel a weaker sense of attachment to their new electoral district than might voters in areas where little has changed. But, in fact, changing seats does not change participation (Pattie et al. 2012). Indeed, the link between marginality and turnout is unaffected by how much constituencies are changed in redistricting, even though few voters in much-changed seats are likely to know for sure just how marginal their new seats are.

So how is the link between competitiveness and turnout maintained? An answer can be found in the activities of agents of political mobilization such as political parties. Mobilization matters: even individuals who, on the basis of a range of objective measures (for instance, their age, education, income, general interest in politics, and so on) might on occasion need the extra nudge of being asked by someone else to participate in order to make the final step and do so. We have already encountered this effect in the context of families, friends, and perceptions of what is acceptable locally. It also holds for mobilization by political parties.

In plurality systems, mainstream parties tend to focus their local campaign efforts on marginal rather than safe seats, as their goal is to maximize the number of seats they can win, not their national vote share (and hence extra votes piled up in seats where the result is not in question are wasted: Johnston and Pattie 2006; Pattie et al. 2019). And greater campaign intensity in the marginal seats is associated with higher rates of participation there (Hogan 1999; Denver et al. 2004; Fisher et al. 2016; Trumm and Sudulich 2018; Trumm et al. 2017). Non-political get-out-the-vote campaigns also catalyze participation, and being contacted in person is particularly effective: those contacted and encouraged to participate are more likely to do so than those who are not contacted (Green and Gerber, 2004).

Conclusion

The insights offered by the discipline of geography show that place matters for political participation. Accessibility plays a part: the greater the physical barriers to participation, the more likely people are to sit out the opportunity to take part. Some of those physical barriers may be hard to control. But others, such as the quality of transport links, access to sites of participation (polling stations, institutional buildings, and so on), and the means of voting (in person, by mail or online), can be manipulated. The human geography of participation matters too, through a range of compositional and contextual effects. And again, some of these can be manipulated to encourage or discourage participation. Changing from plurality to proportional electoral systems, for instance, reduces the incentives for parties to mobilize support in some places but not in others, with predictable, and measurable effects on participation rates.

While geography matters, it is often a relatively small influence on participation. Its effects are often at the margin, and restricted to those who are less motivated to act. Some individuals will engage in political action whatever the geographical situation in which they find themselves. But for others, particularly where the commitment to participate is somewhat lukewarm, the particularities of the places in which they find themselves, and the communities who live there, can be enough to tip the balance between engaging and remaining aloof from action.

But geography is nevertheless inescapable. All forms of political action take place somewhere, and the locations in which it occurs are rarely utterly random and disconnected from the actions taking place there. To understand political participation fully, we need to understand its geography too.

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PART II

CORE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

CHAPTER 8

RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

PAUL F. WHITELEY

All Models are wrong. But some are useful.

(George Box, Statistician)

In an earlier review of rational choice theories of political participation, I wrote:

> The conclusion is that while a rational choice model gives great insights into political participation, it provides an incomplete account of participation, and by implication this may be true of such models in other areas of political science. (Whiteley 1995: 211)

It is fair to say that recent insights into human decision-making developed in psychology and neuroscience, have greatly strengthened this conclusion. That said, the academic journals still abound with rational choice models applied to all kinds of topics from electoral studies to conflict analysis, and political behavior to international relations. However, recent developments in our understanding of human decision-making pose a real challenge to these accounts of political processes in general and political participation in particular.

The aim of this chapter is to critically evaluate the role of rational choice theory in explaining political participation. The latter includes a variety of different activities such as voting, lobbying, boycotting products, protesting, joining, and in some cases becoming active in political parties and interest groups. The key point is that rational choice theory focuses exclusively on the role of individual incentives as motivates for participation. This means looking closely at the costs and benefits of political action as well as the institutional context and "rules of the game" which influence these incentives.

The early participation theorists largely neglected incentives and so rational choice accounts enriched our understanding of political action when they first appeared. That said, the central problem for rational choice as a framework for understanding human decision-making is that it embraces a very unrealistic model of how choices are made, both in politics and elsewhere. This fact undermines its relevance as a framework for understanding political participation in the real world.

Rational choice theory became prominent in political science with the publication of two books: Anthony Down's *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957) and Duncan Black's *The Theory of Committees and Elections* (1958). Both made significant contributions to understanding participation and opened up a new theoretical perspective on the study of political action.

The earlier empirical theory of participation was summarized by Sidney Verba, one of its pioneers, in the following terms: "According to this model, the social status of an individual—his job, education and income—determines to a large extent how much he participates" (Verba and Nie 1972: 13; see also Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). The arrival of rational choice theory brought a new focus on individual decision-making as the basis for participation, rather than on social characteristics which were implicitly thought to reflect people's interests rather than their conscious choices.

This chapter begins by setting out the basic assumptions of rational choice theory, which as the earlier quote from the statistician George Box makes clear is "wrong" in the sense of oversimplifying human decision-making. That said, it shares this characteristic with all other models in the social sciences which are wrong in this respect, and so the theory stands or falls on its ability to explain behavior which was previously ignored or left unexplained.

Following an examination of the underlying assumptions of the theory, we look at three examples of rational choice models in the study of political participation to address the question: "How useful are they in practice?" The third section then goes on to examine some of the problems of the theory which is apparent from the burgeoning literature on decision-making in psychology and neuroscience. Finally, we evaluate the overall contribution of rational choice theory to research on political participation.

WHAT IS RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY?

Rational Choice theory has its origins in utilitarianism pioneered by the philosopher Jeremy Bentham. It is exemplified by expected utility theory. This assumes that individuals take into account both their preferences for certain outcomes when making decisions, but also the likelihood that these outcomes will occur (see Raiffa 1968). An important development was the arrival of models which took into account the thorny problem of uncertainty and also the role of other actors in decision-making. Decision-making under uncertainty was primarily developed by Savage (1954) and the interaction between actors by Von Neumann and Morgenstern (1944) in the form of game theory.

This approach to theory building has been described as "axiomatic rationality" by two leading contemporary economists (Kay and King 2020). The approach to model-building starts with a set of assumptions or axioms about how individuals should behave. The assumption is that they maximize "subjective utility," and the observance of these axioms is taken to define rational behavior.

From the beginning the theory was not concerned to show how individuals actually do make decisions. Rather, the assumption was made that actors behave "as if" they abide by these rules even if they do not know it themselves. The biologist Richard Dawkins captured this idea in the following passage:

> When a man throws a ball high in the air and catches it again, he behaves as if he had solved a set of differential equations in predicting the trajectory of the ball. He may neither know nor care what a differential equation is, but this does not affect his skill with the ball. (Dawkins, 1976: 96)

One of the reasons why rational choice theory became so dominant in economics is because the Nobel Prize winning economist Milton Friedman (1953) wrote a very influential book on economic methodology which advocated the "as if" assumption. His argument was that assumptions were irrelevant in economic theory and could be completely unrealistic, providing the models accurately predicted outcomes in the real world. This view is now widely criticized (see Maki 2009), but it nonetheless justifies axiomatic rationality.[1] While rational choice models in economics have been dominant for years, they were late in coming to political science. Subsequently, an often rancorous debate took place between the advocates of this approach and their opponents (Hindess 1988; Tsebelis 1990; Eckstein 1992; Aldrich 1993).

Anthony Downs set out the assumptions of rational-choice theory in his book, *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. He wrote:

> A rational man is one who behaves as follows: (1) he can always make a decision when confronted with a range of alternatives; (2) he ranks all the alternatives facing him in order of his preferences in such a way that each is either preferred to, indifferent to, or inferior to each other; (3) his preference ranking is transitive;[2] (4) he always chooses from among the possible alternatives that which ranks highest in his performance orderings: and (5) he always makes the same decision each time he is confronted with the same alternatives. (Downs 1957: 6)

All of these axioms are frequently violated in practice. Thus, individuals often put off making decisions; they do not rank all the alternatives available to them; their preferences are often not transitive; they do not optimize but often seek only satisfactory solutions and finally they revise their opinions all the time, particularly in a fast-moving environment with a rapidly changing set of constraints (Simon 1978; Zaller 1992; Green and Shapiro 1994; Gigerenzer 2008; Kahneman 2011).[3] We will return to this discussion later.

If for the moment we take the "as if" assumption seriously, and accept that people implicitly behave according to the axioms of the theory, then the key question is: Does this help us to understand why some people get involved in politics when others do not? This can only be answered by looking at examples of rational choice accounts of political participation. In this way we can gain insight into the contributions and weaknesses of this approach.

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[1] Despite its dominance, this approach was nonetheless criticized by some economists at the time (see Allais 1953).

[2] Transitivity means that if an individual prefers A to B, and B to C, then they should logically prefer A to C.

[3] Maurice Allais once asked Leonard Savage, one of the founding fathers of rational choice decision-making under uncertainty, what he would do if he faced a particularly difficult set of choices between rival lotteries. When Savage responded, Allais quickly pointed out that his decisions were inconsistent with the Von Neuman and Morgenstein model of rational behavior (Binmore 2009: 42).

RATIONAL CHOICE AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In this section we look at three different rational choice theories which have contributed to our understanding of political participation. They can be described as: "the Arrow problem," "the median voter theorem," and "the paradox of participation." The Arrow problem focuses on the "rules of the game" which influence the incentives to participate; the median voter theorem looks at the interaction between voters and political parties; and the paradox of participation identifies disincentives to participate which can exist in politics.

The Arrow Problem

The "Arrow problem" shows how individuals can make decisions using all the axioms of rational choice theory described earlier, and yet come up with a collective decision which is irrational. It was named after the Nobel Prize winning economist Kenneth Arrow (1950) who proved it in a much cited article. His analysis was highly abstract, but it has two very important implications for the study of participation. Firstly, it shows that there is no ideal electoral system which can motivate people to participate, since all systems have their strengths and weaknesses. Secondly, and most importantly, it shows that if the rules of the game which govern participation allow too much choice, the result will be chaos rather than effective decision-making. He referred to it as the "possibility" theorem in his paper, although now it is universally referred to as the "impossibility" theorem. He wrote:

> The Possibility Theorem shows that, if no prior assumptions are made about the nature of individual orderings, there is no method of voting which will remove the paradox of voting ... neither plurality voting nor any scheme of proportional representation, no matter how complicated. (Arrow 1950: 342)

His analysis starts by setting up some rather innocuous axioms that are assumed to govern democratic decision-making. The theorem then goes on to shows that all methods of collective decision-making violate one or more of these axioms. In short, democratic decision-making is flawed. In relation to electoral systems it means that there is no optimal system, and they all have their advantages and disadvantages. So, adopting a system involves making a trade-off between desirable goals. For example the single member plurality or "first past the post" electoral system used in Anglo-Saxon democracies produces one elected representative for each constituency, making MPs clearly accountable to the voters (Gallagher and Mitchell 2005). However, the system does not translate vote shares into seat shares in the legislature at all well, creating significant distortions in representation which serve to weaken accountability. This in turn acts as a deterrent to participation.

The conditions that Arrow imposed can be described (informally) as follows:

(1) If option A is preferred to option B, and B is preferred to option C then A should be preferred to C. This is the transitivity requirement mentioned earlier.

(2) All options should be included in what is referred to as "the choice set." This means that individual preferences should not be artificially restricted by ruling out certain options in advance.

(3) Options which exist outside the choice set should not be allowed to influence the rankings within it. For example, if we are ranking apples, oranges, and pears, then grapes which are not in the choice set should have no effect on the comparisons between the other three fruits.
(4) The collective outcome should not be imposed, for example by arbitrarily ruling out alternatives for consideration that are already in the choice set.
(5) No actor can impose their own rankings on everyone else which is described as a "non-dictatorship" condition.

It would be hard to argue that any of these conditions are unreasonable, since they allow complete freedom of choice to actors when choosing candidates, parties, or policy options. However, the consequence is that unstable collective decisions can emerge. This can be seen in the following example.

We assume that three actors have to choose between options **a, b,** and **c**. Assume that the preference orderings for each individual are as follows, where **abc** means that **a** is preferred to **b** and **c**, and **b** is preferred to **c**:

- Individual 1. **abc**
- Individual 2. **bca**
- Individual 3. **cab**

If they are trying to get a collective preference ordering by majority voting, they face a problem:

- Individuals 1 and 3 prefer **a** to **b** and so **a** wins in a vote against **b**
- Individuals 1 and 2 prefer **b** to **c** and so **b** wins in a vote against **c**
- Individuals 2 and 3 prefer **c** to **a** and so **c** wins in a vote against **a**
- ***So the collective decision cycles endlessly*** **a>b>c>a>b>c** ....

This means that when individual preferences are *transitive* collective preferences can be *intransitive*.

This formal model produces a very interesting and general result, namely that decision-making has to be restricted in various ways to get a stable outcome. If the rules of the game are so broad that any issue can be placed on the agenda and there are few mechanisms for identifying priorities and controlling deliberation, the result will be paralysis not greater democracy. It is important to note that if one or more of the conditions are relaxed, the paradox can be eliminated. Thus, in the real world the problem may not be as big as all that. The fact that the assumptions are abstract and narrowly defined limits the relevance of the theory, even though it has a very important underlying message.

THE MEDIAN VOTER THEOREM

The median voters theorem is one of the most widely applied ideas in models of electoral decision-making (see Merrill and Grofman 1999). Developed by Downs and Black from

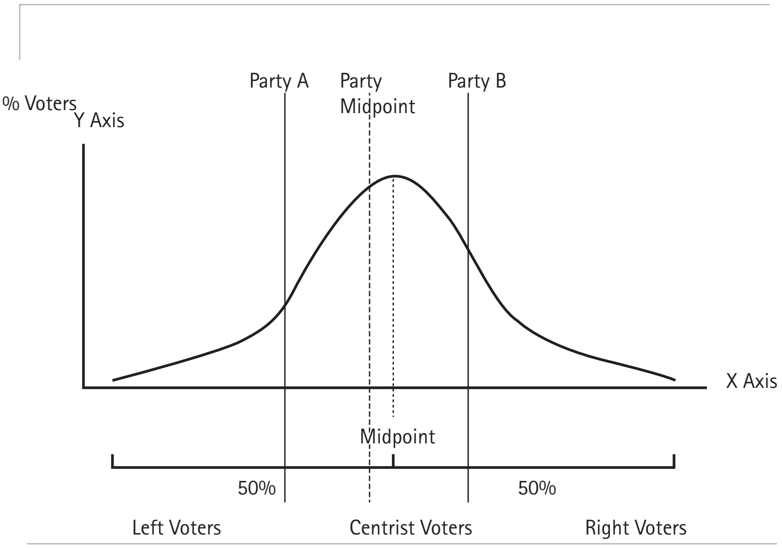

FIGURE 8.1 The Median Voter Theorem

earlier work by the economist Harold Hotelling (1929) in its simplest form it states that in a two-party system in which most voters can be found in the center of the "left–right" ideological dimension, parties which seek to win elections must move to the position of the median voter. It is a formal statement of the well-known clichė that parties must capture "the middle ground of politics" in order to win elections.

The theorem is illustrated in Figure 8.1, where the horizontal axis X represents the left–right ideological dimension in politics, and the electorate are distributed along this in the form of a bell-shaped "Normal" distribution. A key assumption is that individuals will vote for the party which is closest to them on this dimension. In addition, it is assumed that parties opportunistically move along it in order to win votes. For this reason it is often referred to as the spatial model of party competition.

To see how it works, assume that party A is on the center-left and party B on the center-right of the left–right ideology scale. In Figure 8.1, party B wins the election since it gains all the voters to the right of the voter midpoint (the thickly dotted line) and in addition it wins those voters between the party midpoint (the thin dotted line) and the voter midpoint. The party midpoint represents the ideological boundary between the parties and it is different from the voter midpoint. Because more voters are closer to party B than they are to party A, then B wins the election.

Given the assumption that parties are vote-seeking, then in response to electoral defeat, party A will be forced to move to the voter midpoint, and if party B does not respond, then A will win a subsequent election. Clearly, to avoid this happening, party B will also have to move to the voter midpoint, even though party A is already located at this position. The upshot is that both parties end up in the median position of the distribution of voters, which proves the median voter theorem.

If everyone can abstain the model produces a paradoxical result. On the one hand party strategies encourage individuals to turn out and vote. This is because if parties did not behave

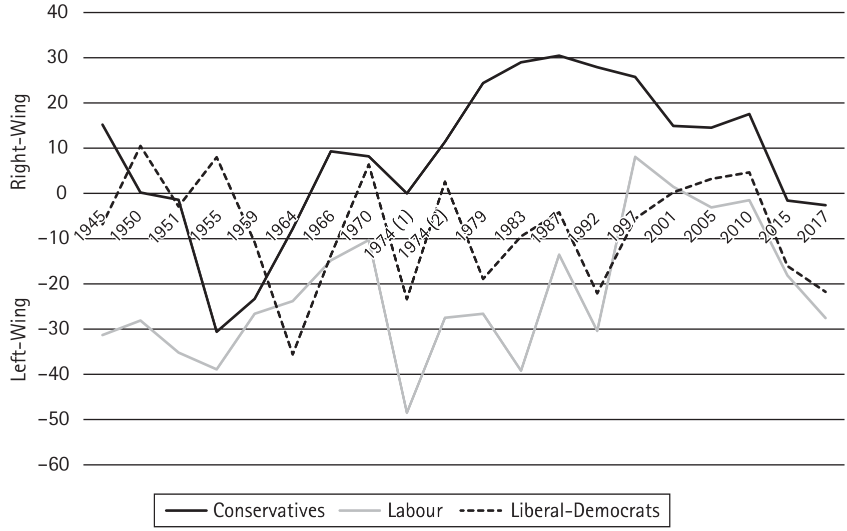

FIGURE 8.2 Party Positions on the Left-Right Ideological Dimension in British Politics 1945 to 2017 from Party Manifesto Data

strategically then supporters of losing parties would have no incentive to vote at all, because their party would never win power and deliver the outcomes they want. On the other hand if both parties end up in the median position, this eliminates the incentive to vote because actors can no longer decide which party to support if they are both promising to do the same thing.

There is a solution to this conundrum, but it involves abandoning the spatial model and adopting the valence model of party competition instead. The latter model was originally introduced by Donald Stokes (1963), and he defined valence issues as those over which there is a consensus among the voters about policy goals. Thus, the great majority of voters want a prosperous economy, freedom from crime and terrorism, and efficient public services such as health care and education. In these cases, the vast majority prefer a good performance to a bad one, and so there is little or no disagreement about goals. This means that electoral contests are not about agreeing or disagreeing over left–right issues, but rather about which party can deliver the desired outcomes.

The empirical evidence from voting models shows clearly that spatial issues are relevant when individuals cast ballots, but they are easily eclipsed in importance by valence issues (Clarke, Sanders, Stewart, and Whiteley 2004, 2009). Occasionally, an election campaign will be dominated by a spatial issue such as the thorny question of Britain's membership of the European Union. However, for most elections, valence issues, particularly the performance of the economy, are much more important.

There is an additional problem facing the spatial model which is illustrated in Figure 8.2, namely that it does not predict how party strategies will evolve over time at all well. The figure shows party positions on the left–right ideological dimension in British politics in every election between 1945 and 2017. The data come from the party manifesto project,[4] which uses a statistical technique known as content analysis to code the issue preferences of parties as set out in their election manifestoes (see Budge et al. 2001). The technique translates policy objectives into an ideology scale which can be used to identify where parties are located and so signals to voters where their most preferred party is to be found.

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[4] See https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/.

In its pure form, the theory predicts that all three parties would occupy the same point on the left–right ideology scale where the median voter can be found. In other words, there would be a single ideological position for all parties in every election, and this would only change if the median voter moved. In practice, the parties might be separated to some extent due to "noise" in the measurements of manifesto pledges, and the fact that parties need to satisfy other actors such as their activists, who are likely to have different priorities from the voters (Whiteley and Seyd 2002). All of these things mean that parties will diverge in practice from each other on the left–right scale.

That said, the figure shows that party positions on the left–right scale have fluctuated enormously over the post-war period. When the Labour government was elected in 1945 policies swung sharply to the left, and subsequently the Conservatives followed suit in the 1950s. This was a period of centrist "Buskellite" policies, or a combination of center–left policies associated with the prominent Conservative Rab Butler and the Labour leader, Hugh Gaitskell. After that, Labour moved radically to the left after it lost the general election in 1970. This move to the left in the February 1974 election manifesto was actually greater than happened in the 2017 election under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn. Despite this, the party succeeded in winning that election by a narrow margin (Butler and Kavanagh 1974).

Some years later Mrs. Thatcher led the Conservatives well to the right of their previous ideological position, but this did not prevent her from winning elections in 1983 and again in 1987. Similarly, Tony Blair followed suit by shifting Labour to the right after he became leader in 1994 and he won three elections in a row (see Grasso et al. 2019). Finally, Jeremy Corbyn's move to the left in the 2017 election produced a large increase in the Labour vote share and deprived Prime Minister Theresa May of her majority in the House of Commons.[5]

Unless one makes the implausible argument that the median voter swings rapidly from left to right and back again in successive elections, party strategies are not at all consistent with the idea that they move to the location of the median voter. Again, a more plausible explanation of these gyrations is that spatial models play only a relatively minor role in explaining electoral behavior. Parties tend to copy their rivals if a manifesto is successful, with the Conservatives swinging left in the 1950s and Labour swinging right in the 1990s. By and large they do not seek to represent the median voter, but rather try to convince the electorate that they are more competent in delivering valence issues than their rivals. This makes the median voter theorem less relevant in practice.

The Paradox of Participation

The paradox of participation was first identified in a seminal book by Mancur Olson (1965). He writes:

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[5] Note that manifesto scores from the 2019 general election were not published at the time of writing

> A lobbying organisation, or indeed a labor union or any other organization, working in the interests of a large group of firms or workers in some industry, would get no assistance from the rational self-interested individuals in that industry. This would be true even if everyone in the industry was absolutely convinced that the proposed program was in their interests. (Olson, 1965; 11)

The source of this paradox is the fact that the "products" of a lobbying organization or a political party are public policies which can be "consumed" by everyone once they are provided. Thus, public policies are collective or public goods and they have two characteristics which make them different from private goods. Firstly, there is the property of *jointness of supply* and secondly the *impossibility of exclusion* (Samuelson 1954). The former means that if one person "consumes" the good it does not reduce the amount available to everyone else. The second means that an individual cannot realistically be excluded from consuming the good once it is provided. The best example of a collective good is national defense. If the armed forces defend one person this does not reduce their ability to defend others. In addition, once defense is provided, it cannot be applied to only one person, but must be applied to all.

This model explains a puzzle in the participation literature which was ignored by earlier researchers with their focus on resources as the main drivers of participation. The puzzle is that all forms of political participation, with the sole exception of voting, involve only minorities of the population, and sometimes small minorities (Dalton 2014). So, if large numbers of people are willing to vote for a party, why are so few of them willing to join it and in some cases become active? In 2004 an average of just over 3 percent of the population in 36 countries were active in a political party and this figure was declining over time in most of them (Whiteley 2011).

The paradox of participation explains this puzzle by arguing that there are three types of disincentive to discourage rational actors from participating. Firstly, they will avoid any form of political participation in which the costs exceed the benefits, where the latter refer to changes in public policies which the actor thinks are desirable, and the former to the work involved in trying to get these changed. At first sight, it could be argued that the benefits of participation will outweigh the costs for many people. However, if these benefits are collective goods, then actors can obtain them without incurring any costs at all, simply by free-riding on the efforts of others. A rational actor will clearly do this, which provides a strong reason for not participating.

A second reason relates to a lack of efficacy, or the inability of a single person to change things. Even if they do not want to free-ride, their own contribution to providing the collective goods is negligible and so this will deter them from participating. This argument applies to all forms of participation from voting to joining a protest march or supporting a lobbying organization. It is a general problem for rational choice models of participation, although it may lose force if involvement is at the very local level in politics (Dahl and Tufte 1974).

A third problem identified by Downs is that, in a rational choice world, actors have a strong incentive to be ignorant of politics. This is really a logical extension of the paradox of participation, since if it is not rational to participate then it is not rational to follow politics in the media. For example, knowledge of politics is an essential requirement for being a party activist, and so a rational actor will recognize this and avoid the costs of being well informed, and this provides a further disincentive to getting involved.

Given this rather pessimistic conclusion, why then does anybody participate in politics? The answer given by Olson is that party activists, for example, receive selective incentives or benefits which are only available to those who become involved. Examples of these include working in a community of like-minded individuals, and enjoying campaigns and debating politics for its own sake. Furthermore, some activists have ambitions to develop a career in politics. For them activism is a form of apprenticeship aimed at seeking elected office in the future (Seyd and Whiteley 1992).Overall, the theory gives a plausible account of why so few people get involved in high-intensity forms of participation such as party activism.

There are however two problems with this account. The first is that empirical modelling shows that party activism is motivated by reasons which cannot be attributed to a rational choice explanation (Seyd and Whiteley 1992, Whiteley, Seyd, and Richardson 1994; Whiteley and Seyd 2002). The second is that the deterrents to participation discussed earlier also apply to all other types of participation in varying degrees, a point made earlier. So, the theory has a serious problem in explaining why large numbers of people turn out to vote in elections.

To consider the first of these problems, an example of a non-rational motive for becoming a party activist is the strength of the individual's attachment to a party. Some people are really strong supporters of a party, much like football fans who strongly identify with their favorite team. At first sight, this seems to be an eminently sensible reason for becoming active in a party, but it is not consistent with a rational choice account. As Olson makes clear, a strong supporter of a party has the same incentives to free-ride as a weak supporter, so the strength of partisanship as a driver of participation should make no difference to what actors actually do. However, not surprisingly, the strength of partisanship is in practice an important driver of activism (Seyd and Whiteley 1992: 112).

A second example of a non-rational motive is that actors often think "collectively" rather than "individually" about what they can achieve by getting involved in politics. In other words, they are not asking the question, "What can I do to change things?" but rather "What can we do collectively to change things?" Again, this type of thinking is an important reason why some people become active in a political party or participate in other ways (Seyd and Whiteley 1992: 62) but it incompatible with rational choice accounts. This is because the assumption of methodological individualism which underpins rational choice theory means that individuals cannot make decisions for a group since they have no control over group actions. They can only act for themselves. In a rational choice world, there is no such thing as society.

These are examples of motives for participating which lie outside the scope of rational choice accounts, but they are not the most important problem facing the theory. This is, undoubtedly, the prediction that in a rational choice world very few people will vote. This problem was first highlighted by Riker and Ordeshook (1968) in a much-cited article. It originates from the three deterrents to participation discussed earlier—free-riding, a lack of individual efficacy and rational ignorance. There have been some heroic attempts to explain away this problem over the years, but none of them are really convincing (Ferejohn and Fiorina 1974, Hinich 1981; Blais 2000). The truth is that rational choice accounts can help to explain away theoretical problems facing earlier models of participation, but as we have seen, they create problems of their own. In the next section we discuss these problems in more detail.

EMERGING CRITIQUES OF RATIONAL CHOICE

It is fair to say that recent work in cognitive psychology and neuroscience has cast considerable doubt on the validity of rational choice theory in general and its role in explaining political participation in particular. One of the earliest approaches to the task of providing an alternative account of decision-making in political science came from Sam Popkin (1991). He writes about what he describes as "low information rationality":

> The term low information rationality – popularly known as "gut reasoning" – best describes the kind of practical thinking about government and politics in which people actually engage. It is a method of combining, in an economical way, learning and information from past experience, daily life, the media, and political campaigns. This reasoning draws on various information shortcuts and rules of thumb that voters use to obtain and evaluate information and to simplify the process of choosing between candidates. (Popkin, 1991: 7)

He provides a theory of how people acquire information and the shortcuts they take in order to understand politics, so that voting becomes a low-cost activity. His key argument is that people acquire information about politics as a by-product of their everyday lives. Some people are political junkies and follow the details of policymaking, but most people are not in this group. However, the latter have bank accounts, pay mortgages; buy fuel and go shopping; in addition they have to pay their taxes each year. A key point is that all of these activities provide information about how the government is doing in managing the economy, delivering crime-free streets, and providing health care and education. In the case of the economy, which is often the most important issue in elections, these activities give them information about rates of inflation, the costs of borrowing and saving, and the state of the job market from information provided by their network of family and friends.

Voters also learn about other policies, such as crime in their neighborhoods and areas to avoid after dark because of anti-social behavior. They learn about the state of the roads and how many potholes exist in their locality; they find out if the trains and buses run on time and this tells them about transport policies. They discover how difficult it is to get an appointment to see a doctor, or to get an operation in their local hospital, telling them about health care policies. Parents find out how difficult it is to get their children into the local schools of their choice, a guide to education policymaking. Everyday life provides a wealth of experience about how the government is performing. These in turn provide heuristics, or rules of thumb for judging the competence of governments.

The political psychologist Paul Sniderman has also made important contributions to the early understanding of information processing and heuristics. He explains: "People can be knowledgeable in their reasoning about political choices without necessarily processing a large body of knowledge about politics" (Sniderman et al. 1991: 15). He also argues that different types of people will use different heuristics—for example, the politically sophisticated will often judge politicians on their records, whereas the unsophisticated will judge them on their appearance, demeanor, and "likeability." Clearly, this is far removed from the calculations required in a rational choice model.

A subsequent development which poses an additional challenge to rational choice accounts of reasoning is the theory of affective intelligence. This examines the role of emotions in political reasoning (Marcus 2000; Marcus, Neuman, and Mackuen 2000). Emotions, used to be seen as an "end state," with new information producing happiness, satisfaction, anxiety, etc. and these feelings would often be thought to distort reasoned cognitive judgements. The theory of affective intelligence overturns this idea, suggesting that emotions essentially manage information processing, acting as a pre-processor to cognitive reasoning. In other words, they are an essential part of human reasoning.

An idea closely linked to affective reasoning is "motivated reasoning" which occurs when emotional attachments to an ideology, a political leader, or party, subsequently controls cognitive reasoning about them (Green and Shapiro 1994; Green, Schickler, and Palmquist 2002; Leeper and Slothus 2014). Thus, a strongly partisan voter is likely to reject critical information about their own party while at the same time welcoming such information about a rival party. This is a direct consequence of emotions acting as a pre-processor to cognitive reasoning and it is fundamentally inconsistent with rational choice accounts, in which actors should dispassionately evaluate new information and try to avoid bias.

A rather spectacular example of motivated reasoning occurred after the 2020 US presidential elections when about half of Trump supporters initially believed the president's claim that the election had been rigged against him. Many persisted in this belief subsequently despite the fact that multiple lawsuits and investigations have found no evidence to support the claim.[6] In effect affective attachments drove reasoning rather than the other way round.

It might be argued that emotional reasoning can simply be absorbed into rational choice accounts of decision-making, becoming part of the calculations of costs and benefits. However, research by the Nobel prize-winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman (2011) makes clear that this is highly unlikely. He classifies the process of human reasoning into two distinct systems. System one operates automatically and relatively quickly with high emotional content and little effort. For the most part, reasoning of this type takes place in the unconscious mind. In contrast, system two requires close attention to the task in hand and a mental effort to run conscious calculations of alternatives when reaching conclusions. He writes: "The automatic operations of System 1 generate surprisingly complex patterns of ideas, but only the slower System 2 can construct thought in an orderly series of steps" (Kahneman 2011: 21).

Clearly, rational choice decision-making operates almost entirely in the domain of system two thinking. However, this raises the long-standing problem that human attention is limited, and so system two thinking can blind the individual to new information when they are focusing closely on a complex task. This phenomenon was vividly illustrated in an experiment by psychologists Chabris and Simons (2010). They made a film of a basketball game and showed it to various subjects who were asked to count the number of passes made by one of the teams during the game. This task was difficult and required close attention to the game and extensive use of system two thinking. When asked to report on what they had observed, more than half of the subjects did not notice a woman wearing a gorilla suit crossing the court during the game even though she was on camera for a total of nine seconds.

Kahneman (2011) describes a number of ways in which system one interferes with system two, some of which lead to highly misleading conclusions. Examples include "anchoring" effects, when people fix on an arbitrary value for an unknown quantity when trying to estimate its value; the "availability" heuristic when individuals rule out options which they do not immediately perceive and so miss important possibilities; and the "certainty" effect when they assign a high probability to an event which has a large impact on their consciousness even though it is rare. These and other distortions derive from the limited cognitive capacity of human beings to work with system two problems.

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[6] See https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-usa-election-poll/half-of-republicans-say-biden-won-because-of-a-rigged-election-reuters-ipsos-poll-idUKKBN27Y1AG?edition-redirect=uk.

The cognitive psychologist Gerd Gigerenzer goes further than Kahneman by challenging the idea that rational choice is a normative aspiration or "gold standard" for understanding efficient decision-making, even if it is difficult in practice. He writes:

> The heuristics and biases program correctly argues that people's judgements do in fact systematically deviate from the laws of logic or optimization. But it has hesitated to take two necessary further steps: to rethink the norms, and to provide testable theories of heuristics. The laws of logic and probability are neither necessary nor sufficient for rational behaviour in the real world, and mere verbal labels for heuristics can be used post hoc to "explain" almost everything. (Gigerenzer 2008: 7)

He introduces the idea of "ecological rationality" which provides a guide to understanding behavior, which is based on the fact that humans have evolved in an environment over millions of years. In his view, this should be the basis for understanding rational behavior rather than an abstract normative theory. For humans, survival meant that they faced key challenges of adapting to environments and he describes a number of "fast and frugal" heuristics which enable them to do this. He writes, "A heuristic is fast if it can solve a problem in little time and frugal if it can solve it with little information" (Gigerenzer 2008: 7).

He illustrates this idea with a simple problem, namely, how does a baseball player catch a ball when he has to run to be in a position to do so? An optimization story of the type mentioned earlier would argue the player unconsciously solves a set of differential equations which precisely determine where the ball is going to land. This is of course the "as if" assumption discussed earlier. Instead, Gigerenzer substitutes the "gaze heuristic" which explains how this is done in practice. This involves the player fixing their eyes on the ball as it moves in the air, and running towards it, while at the same time adjusting their speed to make sure that the angle of the gaze with the ball remains constant. He writes: "A player who uses this heuristic does not need to estimate wind, air resistance, spin, or the other causal variables. He can get away with ignoring every piece of causal information. All the relevant information is contained in one variable: the angle of the gaze" (Gigerenzer 2008: 21–22).

This speaks to a recurring theme in support of rational choice accounts which is that the "as if" assumption is justified by a Darwinian process of natural selection. The argument is that anything less than an optimal strategy will be eliminated by evolutionary processes, so we end up with a rational choice outcome even if the process involved in doing so is obscure. However, recent work in neuroscience suggests that the argument is false. There is a clear difference between optimization strategies and evolutionary decision-making.

In a cleverly designed study, psychologists Mark, Marion and Hoffman (2010) use simulations to estimate the extent to which "truth strategies" defeat "survival strategies" in an evolutionary game. The former require that actors see the world as it actually is, recognizing the truth of propositions like their inability to change outcomes in certain situations. Obviously, recognition of reality is a crucial feature of rational choice accounts. In contrast, survival strategies only require limited attention to objective reality as long as it ensures survival. The latter, for example, give rise to the well-known phenomenon that humans are more likely to pay attention to negative news which might be a potential threat to survival than positive news which is not (Soroka and McAdams 2015).

They write: “Natural selection can send perfectly, or partially, true perceptions to extinction when they compete with perceptions that use niche-specific interfaces which hide the truth in order to better represent utility. Fitness and access to truth are logically distinct properties. More truthful perceptions do not entail greater fitness” (Mark, Marion and Hoffman, 2010: 513).

In short, if distorted perceptions of reality ensure greater survival, they will be adopted, and strategies that focus on understanding the world as it is will fail. If illusions help survival, then they will replace reality. Needless to say, rational choice accounts are based on truth strategies as a well as system two thinking. This research adds to a growing body of evidence which suggests that the classical rational choice strategies are neither realistic nor optimal for human decision-making.

Conclusions: Where Does this Leave Us?

Most of political philosophy is concerned with normative questions, such as understanding the meaning of justice, human rights, and the nature of freedom. The focus here is very much on how the world should be, rather than how it actually is in practice. The main conclusion of this review is that rational choice theories in political science should be treated exclusively as normative accounts of politics. They can be useful, but they often provide a weak understanding of how the political world actually works in practice.

The value of rational choice lies in identifying logical paradoxes, inconsistencies, and incompleteness in political theories. In the three examples we examined, the analysis drew attention to the contradictions which can arise between individual and collective decision-making. This exercise really helps to understand decision-making in politics, when individuals are choosing whether to participate or not. Just as Jeremy Bentham’s approach to utility theory was avowedly normative, today’s rational choice models continue in that tradition, despite the fact that they often claim to be relevant to explaining the complex world of politics.

A second conclusion is that contemporary theories of human decision-making show that the assumption that individuals behave “as if” they were rational is simply wrong. Actually, this assumption has never provided an adequate justification for translating a normative theory into a positive theory, but this problem is even more apparent today. The game theorist and rational choice advocate Ken Binmore cites a well-known laboratory experiment in which framing a set of choices in term of losses rather than gains makes people intransitive in their choice behavior. He writes rather ruefully: “It is this kind of reason that professors of marketing teach their students to laugh at economic consumer theory, which assume that shoppers behave rationally when buying spaghetti or toothpaste” (Binmore 2009: 23).

Moreover, the belief that all human decision-making can be modeled by system two reasoning has produced serious mistakes in both theory and in public policies. This is well illustrated by the “rational expectations” revolution in economics which dominated the subject for many years.[7] This model of decision-making assumes that while people can make mistakes in the short run, they will always pursue optimization strategies consistent with neo-classical economic theory in the long run (Muth 1961; Lucas and Sargent 1981). In other words, they are ultra-rational.

This theoretical assumption meant that macroeconomic theories simply ruled out the possibility of a financial crisis occurring in a modern economy. Actors who optimize do not pursue strategies that lead to a financial crash. When Queen Elizabeth asked her famous question "Why did nobody see this coming?" in a visit to the LSE after the financial crash of 2008, the answer was that rational expectations theorists were blind to the possibility. They did not see the woman in the gorilla suit.

Economists are now moving away from this highly restrictive model as the recent work by development economists Banerjee and Duflo (2011) demonstrates. Their study of global development involves a combination of anthropology, political science, sociology, and economic reasoning, all aimed at understanding third-world development in practice. Instead of making sweeping a priori assumptions about human behavior, they proceed with a careful examination of the evidence, backed by many field experiments which often show that behavior contradicts the assumptions of standard theory.

To conclude, rational choice theories can help us to understand certain aspects of political participation, particularly when examining the relationship between individual decision-making and collective outcomes. When people participate in order to try to change things, there is a clear pattern of thinking which focuses on effective strategies for doing this, which rational choice accounts help to explain. However, pure rational choice theories of participation face as many problems as they solve. This means that yet more formal optimization models of political participation, conflict analysis, international relations, or for that matter in any other branches of political science, are unlikely to help us to understand the highly complex world of politics as it is in reality.

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[7] This assumption has been adopted by some researchers in political science (see for example Duch and Stevenson 2008).

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CHAPTER 9

POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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This chapter focuses on research on political participation that can be characterized as falling within the interdisciplinary research field of political psychology. On a very broad level, political psychology concerns the application of psychological knowledge to the study of politics. As such, the field of political psychology not only concerns itself with citizens' political participation, but political behavior in a wider sense, as well as political attitudes and political communication, and also analyzing elite behavior. The field of political psychology has grown rapidly and there are now several journals, academic societies, and handbooks specifically focused on political psychology (e.g., Huddy et al. 2013).

Before we start, we should clarify what we mean by "political participation." Early work on political participation focused mainly on acts such as voting, or working for a political party (e.g., Riker and Ordeshook 1968). A lot of more recent work has focused on protest activity, which includes acts such as participation in peaceful demonstrations and signing petitions, but also political violence (e.g., Giugni and Grasso 2019; Karampampas, Temple, and Grasso 2019). During the past decades, the internet as an arena for political activity has become the focus of much research, and several scholars have recognized that activities that can be performed offline can also be performed online (George and Leidner, 2019), such as signing petitions (e.g., Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013), and sharing political material (e.g., Bäck et al. 2019). Social media has enabled individuals to engage with vast numbers of people, and to mobilize large-scale offline protests. Many of these different participation forms have been studied within the tradition of political psychology.

The outline of this chapter is as follows. In the first part, we discuss social psychology and participation, especially the role of social influence and social pressure, as social psychology has long influenced the field of political psychology (see also Klandermans & van Stekelenburg, chapter 10, in this volume). Second, we discuss how personality is related to participation, drawing on the literature on political participation that has been influenced by personality psychology (see also Ackermann, Chapter 10, in this volume). Finally, we discuss the role of emotions in political psychology—a research area that has grown rapidly over the past decades. For instance, scholars have shown that anger has a mobilizing force (e.g., Valentino et al. 2011). We conclude this chapter by highlighting the importance of combining the different psychological perspectives when explaining political participation.

The Role of Social Influence in Political Participation

A Basis in Social Identity Theory

Much scholarly work on political participation within the field of political psychology draws on social psychology, which can broadly be described as the study of the influence that other people have on an individual's thoughts, attitudes, and behavior (see also Duncan, in this volume). Even though many would like to think of their attitudes and behaviors, for example related to politics, as something stemming solely from their own rational thoughts, there is much evidence that other people influence individuals' thoughts and behaviors. This influence can come about in various ways, but a basic principle is that humans value being accepted and appreciated by others. Social and cultural norms have strong influence on individuals, and people learn from family and friends what is accepted, including political attitudes and behaviors. In line with this, increasing amounts of research consider the social benefits that political groups and political participation provide (see e.g., Bäck, Bäck, and Garcia 2013).

Much of this work draws on social identity theory, which describes how an individual's identity is fused with group identities (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1986). All individuals are members of different social groups, which can be clearly defined, but where group boundaries also can be fuzzy and unclear. For instance, political attitudes have been shown to constitute psychologically relevant group boundaries (e.g, Bäck and Lindholm, 2014). The groups that individuals belong to constitute a part of that individual's self-image, making the social world a part of the individual.

In social identity theory, the feelings connected to the social group(s) one belongs to are important. Membership in social groups provides a source of self-esteem (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 1986), satisfying the need for social belongingness and the need for positive distinctiveness (Baumeister and Leary 1995; Brewer 1991, 2007). To identify with a group creates positive emotions regarding the group and often negative emotions toward other groups (Brewer 2007) that threaten their own group, strengthening the social identity (Stephan et al. 2015). Hence, the creation of groups almost inevitably creates intergroup tension, especially when one group perceives that another group may challenge their values and resources. This is the central notion of intergroup threat theory (e.g., Stephan et al. 2009). Threats posed by other groups strengthen intergroup emotions—liking for their own group and disliking of other groups (Mackie et al. 2000).

In line with basic research on social identity, identification with a group is an important predictor of participation, and its role in protest activities has especially been the focus of research. The basic assumption in models emphasizing identity is that the more an individual identifies with a social group, the more likely they are to participate in collective actions on behalf of this group (see e.g., Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013; van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears 2008; for an overview, see Duncan, in this volume). Engagement with groups that one identifies with serves adaptive functions such as fulfilling the basic motives postulated by social identity theory (Tajfel 1978). Participation should thus function as a way to build or sustain social relations. This is where social influence and social pressure come in as explanations for political activity.

The Role of Social Influence in On- and Offline Participation

Social psychology has shown that human behavior is highly affected by others' presence, which can be real, or implied (Allport 1954). Traditionally, social influence is split in two qualitatively different forms of influence called informational or normative influence (Deutsch and Gerard 1955). Individuals act under informational social influence when their actions are guided by others' behaviors in situations of uncertainty or ambiguity (Alexander, Zucker, and Brody 1970). For instance, when an individual is uncertain about how to act, they can observe others and mimic their behavior. Normative social influence is present when individuals adapt their attitudes and behavior to fit in.

Because it is important for individuals to be accepted, people manage how they are perceived, a field of research known as impression management (Goffman 1959; Leary and Kowalski 1990). One way to manage the impressions that an individual wants other to have of them is by moderating the displayed attitudes and behaviors. For instance, by displaying a political position, one is tied closer to others that share this position, while simultaneously distancing oneself from opponents—two important group-enhancing features. Hence, displaying certain political positions is a way to express identity, which functions to connect and/or distance the individuals from others.

Much research has focused on social influence in voter turnout, for example analyzing the impact of so-called "get out the vote" (GOTV) messages. Postcards that stress the public nature of voting records, and direct voter contact, for example through canvassing and phone calls, have a significant impact on individuals' likelihood to turn out at the polls (see e.g., Gerber, Green, and Larimer 2008; Gerber and Green 2000; Green and Gerber 2015). This type of research shows that social influence is important to consider when explaining offline, electoral political participation.

However, social influence is highly important in online settings as well. A seminal large-scale experiment by Bond et al. (2012), based on 61 million Facebook users, shows that when people were informed on Facebook that their friends had voted in the 2010 US congressional elections, they were more likely to vote themselves. These individuals also became more politically self-expressive and sought more information. The probability of an individual engaging in self-expressing political behavior as a result of claims made about their friends, was reduced when the relative distance to the friends increased (Bond et al. 2012). Hence, observing close friends' engagement was more influential for the likelihood of voting than observations of more distant friends. Making use of the same Facebook data, Bond et al. (2017) show that social endorsement cues are differentially effective for different types of political behaviors—looking at political expression, information seeking and voting, and finding the greatest effect on political expression.

Other studies find similar results, where exposure to Facebook friends' political activity on Facebook was positively related to political participation both on Facebook and in general (Vitak et al. 2011). Experimental research supports this, where emphasizing social norms within social networks, such as status updates containing social pressure messages, can increase voter participation, through utilizing the technological features of the Facebook platform to communicate these norms (Haenschen 2016).

Hence, social pressure influences people to engage, online and offline, which also means that some people engage in political actions due to a fear of otherwise being rejected or excluded. This idea has been the core of a number of studies on participation (see e.g., Bäck et al. 2013; Knapton et al. 2014; Bäck et al. 2020). As already described, being part of groups is highly important to most individuals. Consequently, being ostracized, rejected, or excluded from a group has substantial impact on well-being, thwarts social needs and even results in social pain (Eisenberger, Lieberman, and Williams 2003; Williams and Zadro 2005). A vast body of research in psychology has established the negative emotional reactions to social exclusion and rejection (Williams 2009).

In line with such work, we have argued that an ostracized individual may conform to group norms and be willing to engage in, and condone, political activity together with a group that they belong to, or want to belong to, to fortify thwarted needs of belongingness (e.g., Knapton et al. 2014; Bäck et al. 2020). For instance, an individual's choice to engage politically can be influenced by the desire to show other group members that one is a "good" member of the group, thus securing one's own place within it, and minimizing the risk of future group exclusion (e.g., Bäck et al. 2013).

THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Personality and Political Participation

During the past few decades, scholars have begun to turn to personality as a predictor of political participation (Caprara and Zimbardo 2004; Mondak and Halperin 2008; Freitag and Ackermann 2016). Personality traits are defined as "the relatively enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguish individuals from one another" (Roberts and Mroczek 2008: 31). An increasing amount of research examines how personality differences impact whether individuals engage politically. Most of the research within political psychology on personality has examined the Big Five model, which states that there are five core personality traits: Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience (see Ackermann, in this volume, for more detail on how these traits affect participation).

The five-factor model has long been highly popular in political psychology, but its predictive power in specific political actions is often relatively weak. Connecting back to the social nature of humans, we suggest that other traits that relate to individuals' social needs is an important avenue for political participation research, and we therefore turn to such features next, focusing on the traits' "rejection sensitivity" and "need to belong."

Rejection sensitivity is a personality feature that aids in understanding why some people, more than others, seem to readily adapt to a new group following social exclusion.[1] Rejection sensitivity has been defined as a disposition to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and intensely react to rejection (Berenson, Gyurak, Ayduk et al. 2009; Downey, Khouri, and Feldman 1997), explaining why some individuals are more vulnerable to rejection than others (Downey and Feldman 1996). Individuals who are sensitive to rejection have usually experienced rejection or other forms of social exclusion from close others previously (Downey, Freitas, Michaelis, and Khouri 1998). Highly rejection-sensitive individuals more readily adapt to a group following an exclusion episode (Bäck, Bäck, Altermark, and Knapton 2018; Bäck, Knapton, and Bäck 2018; Bäck, Bäck, and Knapton 2015; Renström, Knapton, and Bäck 2020). This may result in higher levels of activity, but rejection sensitivity may also lead people to refrain from certain actions because of a fear of disapproval. Individuals who are highly rejection sensitive, are also less inclined to express their political opinions in social media (Bäck, Bäck, Fredén, and Gustafsson 2018).

Another personality feature that is related to the importance of social influence in political participation is the individual's *need to belong*. The need to belong (NTB) scale captures an individual's desire for interpersonal acceptance and belonging (Leary et al., 2013).[2] Engagement and cooperation in various groups may function to satisfy this need and minimize the risk for exclusion (De Cremer 2002; Klar and Kasser 2009). A recent study shows that age interacts with need to belong when it comes to engagement in protest activities. Young people, who generally are more concerned with others' approval, engaged more in protests the higher their need to belong was. No such effect was found for middle-aged or older people (Renström, Bäck, and Aspernäs, 2020).

Need to belong also affects online political participation. In one study, we manipulated information to participants about the most shared and liked political material among their friends on Facebook, or among their extended network on Facebook (i.e., friends of friends). Compared to a control condition, where participants were supposedly shown a random petition, those in the friends and extended network condition were more likely to hit a "like" button on the petition they were shown, as their level of need to belong increased. Moreover, when participants believed their friends had liked and shared a petition, compared to both the extended network and control condition, they were more likely themselves to engage in several political social media activities as their level of need to belong increased (Bäck, Renström, and Sivén 2020). In sum, closeness of friendship matters both in real life and online—the closer others are to the individual—the more they are influenced by their actions, as Bond et al. (2012) also found. But, individuals with a high need to belong are more influenced by others, than are those with a lower need to belong, and hence are more prone to conform to perceived group norms.

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[1] Rejection sensitivity is measured by presenting participants with nine scenarios describing situations where one may face rejection (e.g., "You ask your supervisor for help with a problem you have been having at work"). For each scenario, the participant rates how concerned they would be whether the person would help them and to what extent they expect them to help them. The two responses are related to each other, and then the nine scores are used to create a mean index of rejection sensitivity (Berenson et al. 2009).

[2] The Need to Belong Scale consists of 10 items with statements such as I need to feel that there are persons I can turn to in times of need and it bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans. Agreement with each statement is rated on a Likert-scale, and summed up to a mean index of individual need to belong (Leary et al. 2013).

In a number of studies, it has been shown that such features as rejection sensitivity and need to belong, influence political action intentions (see e.g., Renström et al. 2020). However, they mainly seem to function as moderators of contextual experiences of social exclusion (Bäck et al. 2018; Bäck et al. 2018; Bäck et al. 2014; Renström et al. 2020).[3] Individuals who experience some form of social exclusion are more prone to state that they are willing or intend to engage with a group, especially if they are highly sensitive to rejection and/or have a high need for belongingness. Political participation based in social needs is clearly emotional in nature, that is, individuals are mobilized to engage politically through emotions such as a fear of disapproval, satisfaction, or anger based in feelings of unjust treatment. We turn to describing research focusing on emotions next.

The Role of Emotions in Political Participation

The Impact of Anger, Fear, and Anxiety on Political Activity

A growing literature explores how affect influences political actions and attitudes (Brader and Marcus 2013; Houghton 2009; Lambert et al. 2019). Affect is a broad term that includes both emotions and mood. While mood is generally not associated to a particular stimulus, emotions are "elicited by something, reactions to something, and are generally about something" (Ekkekakis 2013: 322). Emotions inform individuals about a situation and prepare the body for a certain course of action (Frijda 1986). Emotions also affect cognitive processing such as attention, information seeking, and reliance on heuristics and stereotypes (Brader and Marcus 2013). As such, emotions have an important place in explaining political behavior, and it is well established that emotions are important predictors in political activism (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001; Gould 2009, 2011; Klandermans and Stekelenburg 2013), as well as relating to how political information is processed and how political decisions are made (Brader 2006), and political attitudes in a broader sense (Brader and Marcus 2013; Lambert et al. 2019).

There are several different theories on how emotions should be conceived of ranging from a set-up of distinct emotions to a dimensional approach where different emotional states are more fluid. Regardless of how emotions are described, a broad distinction is made by valence, that is, their positive or negative nature. In the past, negative emotions have often been lumped together, regardless of their specific nature, including anger, fear, anxiety, sadness, and so on (see e.g, Brader and Marcus 2013 for an overview).

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[3] Two well-established paradigms of social exclusion are the Cyberball paradigm and the Social Media Ostracism paradigm, both of which are created for experimental purposes. In the Cyberball paradigm, participants are led to believe they play a ball-tossing game online with other participants, using avatars. In the included condition the participant receives the ball at random, but in the excluded condition, the participant only receives the ball once or twice and is then ignored (Williams and Jarvis, 2006). In the Social Media Ostracism paradigm, participants are asked to choose an avatar and present themselves in text. They are then ostensibly connected to 11 other social media profiles where they can like, and receive likes. In the included condition, the participant receives six likes, while participants in the excluded condition receives only one like (Wolf et al. 2014).

An example is the widely influential PANAS, which stands for Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA), and suggests that affect should be conceptualized in terms of these two dimensions (Watson, Clark, and Tellegen 1988). However, much research suggests that different negative emotions have extensively disparate impact on cognition and behavior. In contemporary political psychology research, one of the most common distinctions is that between fear/anxiety and anger. There is much evidence that fear and anxiety, compared to anger, differentially impact cognition and behavior (Bodenhausen et al. 1994; Banks and Valentino 2012; Merolla and Zechmeister 2013; Marcus et al. 2000).

Anger is one of the most researched emotions in psychology. Hence, there is much work on its causes and consequences, both on cognition and behavior. Anger has been described as a goal-pursuing and approach-linked emotion, motivating action and decreasing cognitive processing. Anger is related to physical activity and increased blood flow ("fight" response), which also indicates that angry individuals engage in less cognitive processing. Several studies have shown that anger leads to confrontation and approach (Carver and Harmon-Jones 2009; Harmon-Jones, Harmon-Jones, Abramson, and Peterson 2009; Harmon-Jones, Price, Gable, and Peterson 2014).

This makes anger a good candidate to apply to political participation, and not surprisingly, anger is one of the most explored emotions in political psychology. Anger has been shown to be a strong motivation for people participating in collective actions, such as demonstrations (Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013). As such, anger has a mobilizing function, which was for example shown by Valentino and colleagues (2011) in their article on emotions and voting. One reason why anger has this mobilizing function is that it is elicited by perceived unfairness. Anger is the signal that something must be done to make things just (Lambert et al. 2019). Hence, angry people engage.

Fear and anxiety, as a common concept has also received much attention. However, less attention has been paid to the distinction between *fear* and *anxiety* even though these two emotions could have distinctive effects as well (Sylvers et al. 2011). We here draw on Brader and Marcus (2013), who suggest that a possible distinction between fear and anxiety could be important for future research in the field of political psychology. The labels "fear" and "anxiety" are often used interchangeably in the political psychology literature (Brader and Marcus 2013; Wagner and Morisi 2019). It is true that fear and anxiety share many more features as compared to for instance anger, even though all three are considered negative emotions (Watson et al. 1988). Both fear and anxiety are elicited by threats and serve the evolutionary purpose of survival (Lang, Davis, and Öhman 2000). While fear and anxiety are often treated as reflecting the same underlying emotion, but perhaps of varying intensity, clinical researchers distinguish between anxiety (such as Generalized Anxiety Disorder) and fear (present in specific phobias) (Öhman and Mineka, 2001). In DSM-5 (The diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, APA 2013), anxiety is described as a worry about future events, while fear is a reaction to current events. Moreover, fear and anxiety seem to operate through different neural pathways and have different defining characteristics (Sylvers Lilienfeld, and LaPrairie, 2011).

Fear is a fast emotion in that it is elicited when a threat is imminent or clear and the response also quickly fades. Fear is elicited when a threat is perceived to target the self (Davis and Stephan, 2006). Fear is associated with a sense of danger, and motivates fleeing behavior, which also suggests that fear is a high-arousal emotion, just like anger. Anxiety on the other hand is elicited when the threat is ambiguous, uncertain, or unspecified, and the reaction is a prolonged emotional state. Since the threat is not defined, anxiety does not motivate fleeing in the same manner as fear and has been shown to lead to a mix of approach and avoidance reactions (Gray and McNaughton 2000; Perkins, Inchley-Mort, Pickering, Corr, and Burgess 2012).

Threats, Emotions and Political Activity

There is an extensive body of research in political psychology focusing on how threat affects political behavior. Although, it should be noted that emotions are usually not measured in this line of research (Lambert et al. 2019), which means that even if threat has been found to influence attitudes and behavior, the specific nature of why threat has certain effects is not empirically investigated. Much of the previous research that has examined the relationship between threat and political behavior has focused on intergroup threat. The observed following attitude shift has also mainly been related to political attitudes relating to the threat, such as more restrictive immigration policies, increased military spending following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, but not on other issues related to ideology (Nail and McGregor 2009). Research that uses other types of threats, such as existential threat, has found mixed effects on political attitudes and behavior (Burke, Martens, and Faucher, 2010). A possible explanation of such mixed results is the lack of emotion measures that could function as mediators.

Research from the terror management literature shows that the existential threat elicited by the thought of an unavoidable and imminent death does elicit existential anxiety (Greenberg et al. 1990; Pyszczynski et al. 2003).[4] Mortality salience has been linked to political conservatism, increased nationalism, and increased Republican voting. This effect has been labeled the "conservative shift" hypothesis (Jost et al. 2003; Arndt et al. 2002; Landau et al. 2004). Focusing specifically on participation, Denny (2016) found that experimentally induced financial anxiety increased political participation when participation was easy and immediate, such as signing an online petition.

Most previous research use experimentally induced anxiety, but there are also individual variations in trait anxiety. One study investigated the relation between trait anxiety and political attitudes and found weak relations that anxiety disorders were related to concerns about economic inequality and environmental issues (Helminen 2018). These specific concerns seem fitting, given that anxiety is related to an ambiguous (future) threat. In relation to anxiety disorders, anxiety could potentially be a source of action. Obsessive-compulsive disorder, which is specified as an anxiety disorder by ICD-10 (WHO), is clearly action-oriented. People with this disorder tend to have specific behavioral rituals that aim to relief feelings of discomfort (Soomro 2012).

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[4] Mortality salience is often manipulated by asking participants to 1*) briefly describe the emotions that the thought of your own death arouses in you*, and 2) *write down, as specifically as you can, what you think happens to you when you physically die and once you are physically dead.* Participants in a control condition are often asked to describe some other unpleasant situation, such as a visit to the dentist.

In sum, anxiety influences attitudes, specifically increasing preferences for what is known and safe, but also affects political behavior such as voting for the safe option (Bäck et al. 2020), or other low-cost political actions (Denny 2016). So, it seems that anxiety may have some effects both on political attitudes and behavior, but more research is needed. All in all, there is very little research on how fear, and especially in contrast to, anxiety, affects political participation. One reason for this is that the development of good measures for discrete emotions to be used in self-report surveys has fallen behind (Harmon-Jones, Bastian, and Harmon-Jones 2016).

In a recent study, we found support that fear and anxiety should be treated as separate emotions and that they have different influences on policy support and political action intentions (Renström and Bäck 2021). In relation to the Covid-19 pandemic we found that individuals experiencing fear supported policies restricting individual freedom in an effort to stop contamination, while individuals experiencing anxiety rather supported policies that aimed at supporting the economy. The results make intuitive sense considering that fear is related to withdrawal and physical protection, while anxiety is related to the long-term, uncertain, economic forecast of the pandemic. Anxiety also predicted intentions to engage in political actions, which fear did not. As anxiety may be relieved by performing certain behaviors, as described in anxiety disorders, political engagement may serve the same alleviating function for anxious people. However, these conclusions should be seen as tentative, given the very little research on the effect of anxiety on political participation.

Conclusions and Future Outlook

The literature on participation within the field of political psychology is growing rapidly. Important contributions to understanding why individuals engage in political activities have drawn on social identity theory, and on the idea that individuals are driven by the human need to belong to social groups, thereby being influenced by social pressures and group norms (see e.g., Bäck et al. 2013; Bond et al. 2012; Green and Gerber 2015). Other important contributions to the field have focused on the role of various personality traits, for example showing that extraverted individuals are more likely to engage in social activities, for example attending a rally or demonstration (Mondak, Hibbing, Canache, Seligson, and Anderson 2010). Several scholars have also stressed the role of emotions in understanding why some individuals engage politically whereas others do not. The role of anger has been studied most extensively, for example, it has been shown to be a strong motivation for political participation, such as demonstrations (Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013), and turning out to vote (e.g., Valentino et al. 2011).

To conclude this chapter, we want to emphasize the importance of integrating the different psychological perspectives when analyzing political participation. As mentioned, there are often mixed results with respect to, for instance, personality. One reason for such mixed results is that individuals come equipped with certain predispositions, but the context, for instance the political system in which the individual is situated, may moderate to what extent these predispositions are given space and affect attitudes and behavior. The interaction between context and individual also influences what emotions individuals experience, for instance when facing rejection episodes. The emotional experience then functions as a mediator, explaining why some people engage in certain behaviors, or why people when faced with the same context react differently (Renström and Bäck 2021).

In our own research we consistently find the interaction between individual and context. One of the most robust findings in our research is that socially excluded individuals who are also rejection sensitive, and therefore also experience the most negative emotions due to being excluded, are those most likely to engage with a group, or to even become radicalized. This points to the importance of more complex and integrative models to explain political preferences and behavior. In fact, one could even say that the perspectives are inseparable, but not always measured in tandem. For instance, social identity has strong emotional implications, and personality traits influence what emotions are experienced and how strongly. Such interactions need to be considered if we are to fully understand why individuals engage in political activity.

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CHAPTER 10

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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RESEARCH into protest participation tends to neglect that even in identical circumstances individuals diverge widely in the ways they act politically. A proper understanding of that variation requires a framework that integrates the micro-, meso- and macro-level of analysis. Such integration is frequently asked for but sparsely done.

The agents at the micro-level are citizens who attempt to promote or protect their interests or principles (*demand of politics*). Their counterparts at the meso-level are movement organizations and political parties that offer opportunities to participate (*supply of politics*). *Mobilization campaigns* connect demand and supply. The better the fit of demand and supply and the more persuasive a mobilization campaign, the more likely that citizens will seize the opportunities offered. Citizens, political parties, and movement organizations are embedded in *multiorganizational fields* that further shape the demand and supply of politics. Regimes, institutions, and social cleavages define the opportunities and constraints imposed by the *socioeconomic and political context* (Figure 10.1). Research with a *comparative design* is needed, comparing political participation by individual citizens over time and place to test the framework.

DYNAMICS OF DEMAND

Little is known about how exactly demand is formed. A few decades ago, Klandermans (1984, 1988) introduced the distinction between *consensus mobilization* and *consensus formation*. While consensus mobilization concerns “the deliberate attempts to spread the view of a social actor among parts of the population,” consensus formation concerns, “the unplanned convergence of meaning in social networks and subcultures” (Klandermans 1988: 175). Gamson (1992a) in his *Talking Politics* shows that people use any kind of information source if they talk with their friends about politics. Employing time-series analysis, Vliegenthart (2007) demonstrated for the issues of immigration and integration that

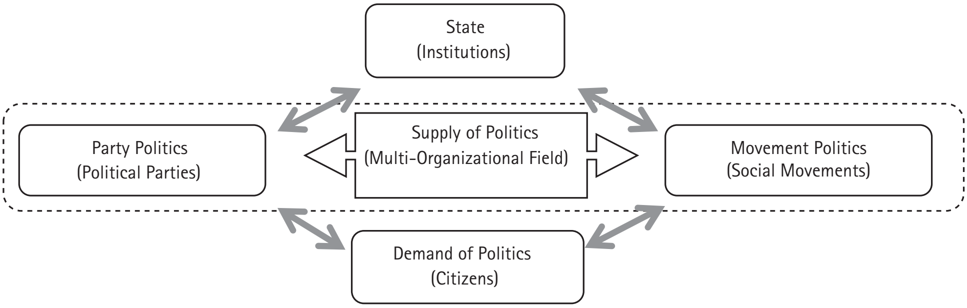

FIGURE 10.1 Routes to political influence

in a complex interplay between real-life events, media attention, debates in the parliament, and debates between politicians, public opinion is formed and converted into anti-immigrant party support in the Netherlands. Van Stekelenburg investigated how in a newly built neighborhood demand for protest developed as a function of the development of formal, informal, and virtual networks. These days the internet and social media play a crucial role in this regard (Earl and Kimport 2011).

The formation of demand is a process that takes place in social interaction. Individuals are embedded in formal, informal, and virtual networks, which in turn are embedded in multiorganizational fields. Taylor (2013) proposes the concept of "*discursive communities*" to signify these settings in which consensus formation takes place. Understanding the formation of demand in a society requires insight into these processes of consensus mobilization and formation.

Grievances, Efficacy, Identity, and Emotions: The Building Stones of Demand

Demand can be conceived of as composed of grievances, efficacy, identity, and emotions. In fact, when theorizing about the formation of demand, we are constructing a grievance theory. Together these four factors determine someone's propensity to participate in collective action.

Grievances. Grievances concern "outrage about the way authorities are treating a social problem" (Klandermans 1997: 38). In *The Social Psychology of Protest* Klandermans (1997) made the distinction between illegitimate inequality, suddenly imposed grievances, and violated principles. The notions of suddenly imposed grievances and violated principles, in fact, originate in the sociological social movement literature. Walsh (1983) coined the first and Kriesi (1993) the second. Suddenly imposed grievances—such as the establishment of a waste incinerator or a highway trajectory near one's neighborhood—are powerful mobilizers as are violated principles. Illegitimate inequality is dealt with in the literatures on relative deprivation and social justice. Relative deprivation theory holds that feelings of relative deprivation result from a comparison of one's situation with a certain standard—one's past, someone else's situation, or an ideological standard such as equity or justice (Folger 1986; Klandermans 2015). If a comparison results in the conclusion that one is not receiving what one deserves, a person experiences relative deprivation. The literature further distinguishes between relative deprivation based on personal comparisons (i.e., individual deprivation) and relative deprivation based on group comparisons (i.e., group deprivation; Kelly and Breinlinger 1996). Research demonstrates that group relative deprivation is particularly important for engagement in collective action (Major 1994), but work by Foster and Matheson (1999) suggests that so-called "double deprivation," that is a combination of group *and* individual deprivation, is even more effective. On the basis of a meta-analysis, Van Zomeren et al. (2008) conclude that the cognitive component of relative deprivation (i.e., the observation that one receives less than the standard of comparison) has less influence on action participation than does the affective component (i.e., such feelings as dissatisfaction, indignation, and discontent about outcomes).

Social psychologists have applied social justice theory to the study of social movements (Tyler and Smith, 1998). The social justice literature distinguishes between two classes of justice judgments: distributive and procedural justice. Distributive justice is related to relative deprivation in that it refers to the fairness of outcome distributions. Procedural justice, on the other hand, refers to the fairness of decision-making procedures and the relational aspects of the social process, that is, whether authorities treat people with respect and can be trusted to act in a beneficial and unbiased manner (Tyler and Lind 1992). Research has found that people care more about how they are treated than about outcomes. Based on these findings, Tyler and Smith (1998) propose that procedural justice might be a more powerful predictor of social movement participation than distributive justice; that is what we found indeed both in our research in South Africa (Klandermans, Roefs, and Olivier 2001) and among migrants in the Netherlands and New York (Klandermans, Van der Toorn, and Van Stekelenburg 2008).

Efficacy. It would be hard to deny that people who are part of a movement's mobilization potential are aggrieved, but as we know meanwhile, grievances do not provide a sufficient reason to participate in collective action. Therefore, the key question of any grievance theory to address is: Why do some aggrieved people protest, while others do not? The first to argue so were the resource mobilization theorists in the 1970s and 1980s (e.g., Oberschall 1973; McCarthy and Zald 1976), and Klandermans (1984) in his social-psychological expansion of resource mobilization theory. More recently, in a large comparative study based on World Value Surveys, Dalton and colleagues (2009) confirmed that grievances are weak predictors of protest. Rather than aggrieved people, it is those who possess political skills and resources who generally protest more, independent of their level of grievances. The underlying political psychological concept is efficacy. People are more likely to participate in movement activities when they believe this will help to redress their grievances at affordable costs). The more effective an aggrieved individual believes collective action participation to be, the more likely that person is to participate. Van Zomeren and his colleagues (2004) propose efficacy as the core of what they call problem-focused coping—one of the two pathways to collective action they define, the other being emotion-focused coping with group-based anger at its core. In a cross-national study, Corcoran et al. (2012) demonstrate the significant role of efficacy for protest participation across 48 countries. Efficacious people participate in collective action no matter what the opportunities are, while opportunities or absence of repression only influence fatalistic people's readiness to take part.

Identity. Next to efficacy, identity, specifically collective identity, became an important concept in the social movement literature in the past decades of social movement studies. Melucci (1981) was among the first to emphasize the significance of collective identity. In the years to follow the concept gained prominence in the social movement literature (see Stryker, Owens, and White 2000). Meanwhile, social psychologists began to explore the role of group identification in movement participation Simon et al. 1998; Simon and Klandermans 2001; Stürmer and Simon 2004), while Van Zomeren and colleagues developed their social identity model of collective action (SIMCA). They all concluded that the more one identifies with a group involved in a protest activity, the more likely one is to take part in that activity.

A complicating matter in this respect is that people simultaneously hold *multiple identities*, while movements tend to emphasize a single identity and refer to a single place in society. As a consequence, people may experience that conflicting identities steer behavior in different directions (cf. Kurtz (2002). Individuals might find themselves under cross-pressure when two groups they identify with are on opposite sides of controversy (e.g., union members faced with the decision to strike against their own company). Indeed, workers who go on strike or movement activists who challenge their government are often accused of being disloyal to the company or the country. González and Brown (2003) coined the term "dual identity" to point to the concurrent workings of supra—and subordinated identities. They argue that identification with a subordinate entity (e.g., ethnic identity) does not necessarily exclude identification with a supraordinate entity (e.g., national identity). In fact, they claim that dual identity is a healthy configuration, as it implies sufficient identification with one's subgroup to experience basic security *and* sufficient identification with the overarching group to preclude divisiveness.

There is evidence that indeed people who hold a dual identity are more satisfied with their situation than people who do not (Simon 2010). Furthermore, studies of Spanish and Dutch farmers, South African citizens, and immigrants in the Netherlands and New York suggest that individuals who reported holding a dual identity were more satisfied with their social and political situation than those who did not hold a dual identity Klandermans et al. 2008). However, if they are dissatisfied, individuals who hold a dual identity were more likely to participate in collective action.

In 2001, Simon and Klandermans published their influential paper on *the politicization of collective identity* (PCI). In order to become the vehicle of collective action, collective identity must politicize, they argued. Shared grievances, common enemies, and a search for third-party support are the core elements of PCI the authors refer to. Simon and his students (Simon and Grabow 2010) have argued that a politicized collective identity is by definition a dual identity. Some sense of identification with the superordinate political entity seems to be a basic requirement of social and political mobilization in that it ensures that this entity is acknowledged as *one's own* social or political habitat or arena. More specifically, to the extent that one identifies with the superordinate entity, one should feel entitled to make political claims, because identity confers rights. Similarly, one should feel motivated to get actively involved in the political game, because it becomes one's own game, and one should feel encouraged to approach third parties as potential allies, because they can be viewed as ingroup members at the superordinate level, so Simon and Ruhs (2008). Politicization divides people's social environment into allies and opponents and results in polarization. Polarization concerns the process of distancing of the opposing camps. The more polarized the relationship becomes, the less deviation from one's own opinions and actions is accepted and the more opinions and acts of the opponents are rejected. Eventually, this may result in radicalization.

Emotions. Recent work in sociology and social and political psychology has brought emotions to the study of social movements (Goodwin et al. 2001; J Van Stekelenburg 2006; Van Zomeren et al. 2004). Emotions can be avoidance- or approach-oriented. Fear, which makes people refrain from taking action, is an example of an avoidance-oriented emotion. Anger is an approach-oriented emotion and is known to be an antecedent of protest participation (Van Zomeren et al. 2004). There appears to be a relation between emotions and efficacy. When people do not feel efficacious, they are more likely to experience fear; feeling efficacious, on the other hand, is associated with experiencing anger (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000). Findings from our study among migrants confirm this: feelings of efficacy reinforced anger and reduced fear, while in turn anger fostered collective action participation while fear undermined it. Van Zomeren et al. (2004) show that anger is an important motivator of protest participation of *disadvantaged* groups. Leach and colleagues (2007) examined readiness for political action among *advantaged* Australians to oppose government plans to redress disadvantaged Aborigines. They found that symbolic racism and relative deprivation evoked group-based anger which in turn promoted willingness for political action. But advantaged group members can also perceive the ingroup advantage as unfair and feel guilt and anger about it. Anger related to ingroup advantage, and to lesser degree guilt, appears to be a potent predictor for protest (Leach, Iyer, and Pedersen 2006). Anger, guilt, and fear are not the only three emotions relevant in the context of movement participation; indeed other emotions such as hope and despair are proposed as well (Gould 2009; Taylor, 2013). Anger moves people to adopt a more challenging relationship with authorities than subordinate emotions such as shame antaylord despair (Taylor 2009) or fear (Klandermans et al. 2008).

In explaining different tactics, efficacy appears to be relevant too. Anger is mainly observed in normative actions where efficacious people protest. However, in non-normative violent actions, contempt appears to be the more relevant emotion; Tausch, Becker, Spears, and Christ 2008). This suggests two emotional routes to protest: an anger route based on efficacy leading to normative action and a contempt route when legitimate channels are closed . and the situation is seen as hopeless, invoking a "nothing to lose" strategy leading to nonnormative protest .

An integrating framework. Strikingly, a comprehensive framework integrating identities, grievances, and emotions into a single model was lacking for a long time. Recently, however, Simon et al. (1998), Van Zomeren et al. (2008), and Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2007, 2009, 2011) have each attempted to build such models. The three models these authors forwarded have in common that they distinguish various pathways to collective action. While Simon et al. (1998) distinguish an instrumental and identity pathway, and Van Zomeren et al. (2008) distinguish between an emotion—and a problem-focused pathway, Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2011) distinguish instrumentality, identity, ideology, and anger as determinants of participation in collective action. Central to all three models are processes of identification in order to develop the shared grievances and shared emotions that a shared identity demands. Similarly, all three models include an instrumentality component with efficacy as a key aspect. In a comparison of the three models, Van Zomeren and his colleagues (2008) concluded that injustice, identity, and efficacy each contributed to the explanation of collective action participation.

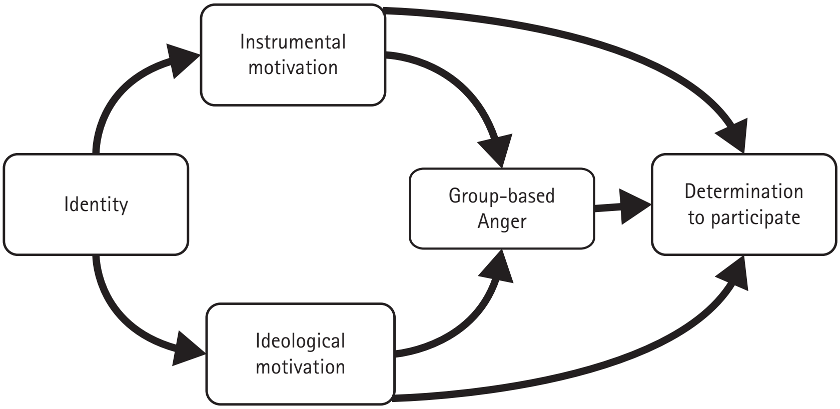

FIGURE 10.2 Factors influencing the determination to participate in collective action

Figure 10.2 depicts a summary of the various models. As dependent variable, we took the strength of the motivation to participate in collective action. Motivational strength results from group-based anger, and instrumental and/or ideological motivation. Instrumental and ideological motivation each result from grievances and feelings of efficacy shared with a group that the individual participants identify with. Grievances may originate from interests and/or principles that are felt to be threatened. The more people feel that the interests of the group and/or principles that the group values are threatened, the angrier they are and the more they are prepared to take part in collective action to protect their interests and/or to express their indignation. Whether a specific level of motivation turns into actual participation depends also on the supply of opportunities to act.

Dynamics of Supply

Movements and movement organizations can be compared in terms of their effectiveness. Measures of effect differ (for example, impact on and access to polity, impact on public opinion, attention of mass media) and people's assessment of effectiveness differs as well. A movement organization's effectiveness can also be assessed on its ability to provide selective incentives (Oliver 1980). Nonetheless, movement organizations try to convey the image of an effective political force. They can do so by pointing to the impact they have had in the past, or to the powerful allies they have. Of course, they may lack all this, but then, they might be able to show other signs of strength. A movement may command a large constituency as witnessed by the turnout on demonstrations, or by membership figures, or large donations. It may comprise strong organizations with strong charismatic leaders who have gained respect, and so on.

The political system and the multiorganizational field movement organizations are embedded in may also show the considerable variation that influences the supply side of movement participation. Repressive political environments may increase the costs of participation considerably: people may lose friends, they may risk their jobs or otherwise jeopardize their sources of income, they may be jailed, and they may even lose their lives (Davenport, Johnston, and Mueller 2005).

An important element of the supply side of participation is the provision of information about the behavior of others (Klandermans 1984). Social networks—real and virtual—are of strategic importance in this respect, because it is through these networks that people are informed about the behavior or intentions of others. In his paper on the Chinese student movement of 1989, Zhao (1998) gives a striking illustration of this mechanism. He describes how the ecological circumstance that most students in Beijing live in the same part of town made the success of the movement in terms of mobilization literary visible in the streets in front of the dormitories. In the virtual world, social media such as Facebook do them .

Social movements play a significant role in the diffusion of ideas and values. Rochon (1998: 31) makes the distinction between "critical communities" where new ideas and values are developed and "social movements" that are interested in winning social and political acceptance for those ideas and values: "in the hands of movement leaders, the ideas of critical communities become ideological frames." Through processes such as consensus mobilization (Klandermans 1988), framing (Snow et al. 1986), or dialogue (Steinberg 1999) movements seek to disseminate their definition of the situation to the public at large. Such definitions of the situation have been labeled "collective action frames" (Gamson 1992b). We may assume that people who join a movement come to share some part of the movement's ideas and values.

Social movements do not invent ideas from scratch: they build on an ideological heritage as they relate their claims to broader themes and values in society. In so doing they relate to societal debates that have a history of their own and that history is usually much longer than that of the movement itself. Gamson (1992a), for example, refers to the "themes" and "counterthemes" that in his view exist in every society. One such pair of a theme and countertheme he mentions is "self-reliance" vs. "mutuality," which is the belief that individuals must take care of themselves vs. the belief that society is responsible for its less fortunate members. In a study of the protests about disability payment in the Netherlands, we demonstrated how in the Netherlands these two beliefs became the icons that galvanized the debates (Klandermans and Goslinga, 1996). While "self-reliance" became the theme of those favoring restrictions in disability payment, "mutuality" was the theme of those who defended the existing system. Another example is what Tarrow (1998) calls "rights frames": human rights, civil rights, women's rights, animal rights, and so on. In other words, collective action frames that relate a movement's aims to some fundamental rights frame. For decades Marxism has been such an ideological heritage from the past which movements have identified with, positively by embracing it or negatively by distancing themselves from it.

The supply side of collective action is not static or a constant. In fact, it has to be constructed again for every mobilization campaign. McAdam et al. (1996) have defined this as *mobilizing structures,* that are "those collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam et al. 1996: 3). Mobilizing structures form the connecting tissue between organizers and participants. At any time, all kinds of groups, organizations, and networks that exist in a society can become part of a mobilizing structure. However, none can be assumed to automatically become part of it. Networks need to be adapted, appropriated, assembled, and activated by organizers in order to function as mobilizing structures (Boekkooi, Klandermans, and Van Stekelenburg

2011; Boekkooi 2012). Many studies have shown that networks are important in explaining differential recruitment and mobilization (Snow, Zurcher, and Ekland-Olson 1980; Walgrave and Klandermans 2010). Assembling a mobilizing structure is an important step in the process of micromobilization. Which organizations join the mobilizing coalition is an important predictor of who will participate in the protest (e.g., Heaney and Rojas 2008). Most studies assessing organizational affiliations show that organizations predominantly mobilize their own members. Similarly, networks tend to reach those who are embedded in their structures. Thus, organizers that assemble different mobilizing structures, be it coalitions of formal organizations, or networks of informal networks, or both, reach different subsets of a movement's mobilization potential (Boekkooi et al. 2011).

Roggeband and Duyvendak (2013) raise the question of whether traditional networks and organizations such as parties, unions, or churches have lost their mobilizing force and are being replaced by light communities and highly fluid mobilizing structures. They suggest that more and more people avoid "heavy" long-term engagements and leave more formal institutions for looser engagements in informal, sometimes temporary, or issue-specific networks. As they also see a change from "identity politics" to "issue politics" these authors speculate that the emergence of "light" communities will be accompanied by a process of individualization resulting in a shift from collective to individual action. It would not come as a surprise that the internet and virtual networks are central in their reasoning. In the processes of framing, social movement organizations work hard to turn grievances into claims, to point out targets to be addressed, to create moral outrage and anger, and to stage events where all this can be vented. They weave together a moral, cognitive, and ideological package and communicate that appraisal of the situation to the movement's mobilization potential. In doing so, social movement organizations play a significant role in the process of construction and reconstruction of collective beliefs and in the transformation of individual discontent into collective action. Grievances can be framed in terms of violated *interests* and/or violated *principles*. Campaigns that emphasize the violation of interests more likely resonate with instrumental motives, while campaigns that emphasize the violation of principles more likely resonate with ideological motives (Van Stekelenburg et al. 2009).

MOBILIZATION

Mobilization is the process that gets the action going: demand and supply would remain potentials if processes of mobilization would not bring the two together. Social networks are indispensable in the processes of mobilization. Individual grievances and feelings are transformed into group-based grievances and feelings within social networks. As early as 1965, Almond and Verba observed a positive correlation between active engagement in voluntary associations and political efficacy. Hence, a movement's mobilization potential can be described in terms of the *social capital* accumulated in it. Lin (1999: 35) defined social capital as "resources embedded in a social structure which are accessed and/or mobilized in purposive actions." Paxton (2002) argued that associational life accumulates social capital, which "provides space for the creation and dissemination of discourse critical of the present government, and it provides a way for active opposition to the regime to grow." (p. 257).

Social embeddedness. The concept of social capital has important implications for advancing our understanding of the role of social embeddedness in protest participation. Social capital has many different attributes, which are categorized into three components: a structural, a relational, and a cognitive component (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998). The *structural* component of social capital refers to the presence or absence of network ties between actors and it essentially defines *who* people can reach. The *relational* component of social capital concerns the kinds of personal relationships people have developed through a history of interaction (Granovetter 1973). It focuses on the particular relationships people have, such as respect, trust, and friendship. Relational capital implies *what* people are actually able to receive in terms of informational, physical, and emotional support. When trust is built between people they are more willing to engage in cooperative activity through which further trust can be generated. The third—*cognitive*—component is defined as those resources providing shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning. It constitutes a powerful form of social capital in the context of protest. The cognitive dimension in protest literature is referred to as raised consciousness—a set of political beliefs and action orientations arising out of an awareness of similarity (Gurin, Miller, and Gurin, 1980, p. 30). Consciousness-raising takes place within social networks. It is within these networks that individual processes such as grievance formation, strengthening of efficacy, identification, and group-based emotions all synthesize into a motivational constellation preparing people for action and building mobilization potential. Part of the infrastructure of a movement's mobilization potential is the communication networks that connect individuals. Walgrave and Klandermans (2010) demonstrate how open and closed communication channels and weak and strong ties weave a web of connections that influence how easy or difficult it is to reach a movement's mobilization potential. Francesca Polletta and her collaborators (2013) suggest that the internet plays an important role in grievance formation. This corroborates Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans' (2012) observation that technologies such as mobile phones, the internet, Facebook, etc. played a crucial role in the mobilization of high-school students in the Netherlands in a protest campaign against the educational policy.

Social embeddedness—be it in formal, informal, or virtual networks—plays a pivotal role in the context of protest. The effect of interaction in networks on the propensity to participate in politics is contingent on the amount of political discussion that occurs in social networks and the information that people are able to gather about politics as a result (McClurg 2003). Klandermans et al. (2008) provide evidence for such mechanisms: immigrants who felt efficacious were more likely to participate in protest provided that they were embedded in social networks, especially ethnic networks, which offer an opportunity to discuss and learn about politics. In other words, this is where people talk politics and thus where the factuality of the sociopolitical world is constructed and people are mobilized for protest (Saunders and Klandermans 2020). Being integrated into a network increases the chances that one will be targeted with a mobilizing message and that people are kept to their promises to participate. For example, people with friends or acquaintances that are already active within social movements are more likely to take part in movement actions than others (R. Gould 1993; Klandermans 1997). Social networks function as communication channels, discursive processes take place to form consensus that makes up the symbolic resources in collective sense-making (Gamson 1992b), and people are informed of upcoming events and social capital as trust and loyalty accumulates in networks to provide individuals with the resources needed to invest in protest.

The process of mobilization. Mobilization is a complicated process that can be broken down into several, conceptually distinct steps. First, it can be broken down into consensus and action mobilization. *Consensus mobilization* refers to dissemination of the views of the movement organization, while *action mobilization* refers to the transformation of sympathizers into action. The more successful consensus mobilization has been, the larger the pool of sympathizers a mobilizing movement organization can draw from. In their frame-alignment approach to mobilization, Snow and Benford elaborated the process of consensus mobilization much further (see Benford 1997 for a critical review). Next, Klandermans and Oegema (1987) broke the process of action mobilization further down into four separate steps: (1) people need to *sympathize* with the cause, (2) need to *know* about the upcoming event, (3) must *want* to participate, (4) and they must be *able* to participate (see Figure 10.3).

Each step brings the supply and demand of protest closer together until an individual eventually takes the final step to participate in an instance of political protest. The first step accounts for the results of consensus mobilization. It distinguishes the general public into those who sympathize with the cause and those who do not. A large pool of sympathizers is of strategic importance, because for a variety of reasons many a sympathizer never turns into a participant. The second step is equally obvious as crucial; it divides the sympathizers into those who have been a target of mobilization attempts and those who have not. The third step concerns the social-psychological core of the process. It divides the sympathizers who have been targeted into those who are motivated to participate in the specific activity and those who are not. Finally, the fourth step differentiates the people who are motivated into those who end up participating and those who do not.

Mobilization with minimal organization. Sometimes the demand for protest can be so overwhelming that very little is needed to bring large numbers onto the streets. In the context of the massive indignation regarding the kidnapping and serial killing of children by Dutroux and judicial errors in Belgium in dealing with it, television and newspapers sufficed as mobilizing actors (Walgrave and Manssens 2000). Yet, the mobilizing power of the media

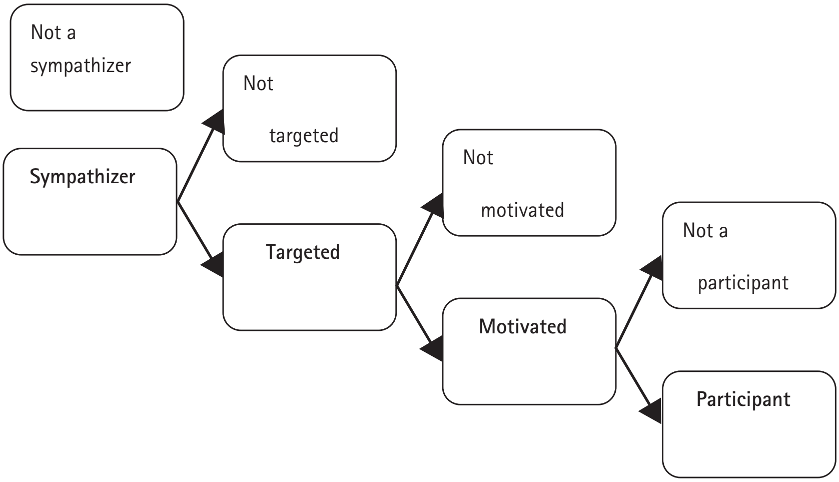

FIGURE 10.3 The process of action mobilization

Source: Adapted from Klandermans & Oegema (1987).

should not be overestimated. They only have the power to mobilize in case of so-called consensual issues (Verhulst 2011), that is, issues that root in suddenly imposed grievances that evoke a communal sense of repulsion and indignation. Examples are the death of a child caused by drunken driving (McCarthy and Wolfson 1996) or random violence (Lodewijkx, Kersten, and Van Zomeren 2008. The salience and the consensual character of the issues compensate for the lack of organizational brokerage making mobilization via the mass media possible. Similarly, Walgrave and Klandermans (2010) report findings from the anti-Iraq war demonstration revealing that appeals via mass media were the more effective in countries with high levels of opposition against the war.

Mobilization with minimal organization has become more effective with the appearance of virtual networks and social media. In November 2007, Van Stekelenburg, Boekkooi, and Klandermans conducted a study on protests staged in the absence of any form of organization (2012). That week in November 20.000 Dutch secondary school pupils took to the streets protesting the deteriorating quality of their education. It took the shape of protests by several groups geographically scattered and diffused over a period of time that were *in promptu* mobilized and short-lived. They were initiated by the stereotypical guy-next-door, Kevin, whose call for action was "virally" spread via face-to-face, personal, and virtual networks. Via mobile phones unrest was uploaded on YouTube and the YouTube films facilitated frame-alignment. In nearly real-life time *would-be* protesters came to share grievances and emotions with *actual* protesters. Questions related to the expected participation of others were instantly answered by the uploaded films and instant messages. Social media, smartphones, and YouTube facilitated organizing without organizations.

CONCLUSION

For a long time, social psychologists did not make much of political participation, be it participation in a political party or a social movement. In turn, political scientists did not pay much attention to social movements. This is now changing. A growing number of social scientists is investigating political behavior these days. This is obviously fostered by the political actions during the last decades. It is our conviction that social psychology has a lot to offer to the study of political participation. This chapter is meant to witness that.

Typically, social psychology takes the individual as its unit of analysis. Moreover, it builds on the assumption that individuals live in a perceived environment. Perceptions are formed and acquire meaning in social interaction with other people. This chapter has tried to review the dynamics, mechanisms, and processes that are involved.

Where are we heading? Major research questions to address in the future concern comparisons of various kinds: between movements, between issues, between countries, between collective actions.

Social psychologists tend to focus on matters of demand. They should give more attention to the supply side of political participation and mobilization. More generally, most social movement studies concern Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic countries. Would the same processes hold for non-WEIRD countries? What about authoritarian regimes like Egypt, Venezuela, or Myanmar?

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CHAPTER 11

RELATIONAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

MARIO DIANI

Among British cities, Glasgow and Bristol have traditionally been regarded as representative of very different political traditions, and very different styles of political participation. The former has been in particular associated with a legacy of confrontational politics and political radicalism, embedded in strong class identities; the latter, with a pluralistic, "laid-back" political culture, inclined towards compromise rather than contention, expression of multiple identities linked to ethnicity and race, gender, lifestyle, as well as class, and a local civil society oriented towards prefigurative rather than radical politics (see e.g., Cento Bull and Jones 2006; Diani 2015: 29–34 and 194–97). While the move from an industrial to a tertiary economy has certainly undermined the salience of class cleavages over the years, the impact of such change over citizen politics has been rarely explored systematically. In the early 2000s, a research project attempted to tackle this question through a reconstruction of the structure of civic organizational networks in the two cities. A total of 258 organizations were surveyed, evenly spread across the two cities, with a focus on environmental, minority rights, and social exclusion issues (Diani and Bison 2004; Diani 2015).

One finding from that project is particularly relevant to this chapter: when asked whether they would consider including confrontational tactics and violence against objects in their repertoire of action, a similar proportion of organizations in the two cities responded affirmatively (Diani 2011: 76). There were still more "radical" groups in Glasgow than in Bristol (one-third vs. one-quarter of the total), but the difference between the two cities was modest, and not significant. For all its limitations, this finding questioned established perceptions of civic life in the two cities. In the light of long-held stereotypes, we might have expected Glaswegian radical organizations to outnumber Bristolian ones by a significant margin. Should we then have rejected assumptions about the political differences between the two cities as some legacy from the past? Accordingly, should we then have concluded that, provided they were ever correct, their profile had become much more homogeneous at the turn of the century? This would have sounded like a sensible conclusion if we had just looked at the distribution of the properties that we took as indicators of "radical politics." By that standard, the profile of civil society in the two cities would have looked quite similar.

However, a very different picture emerged from a network perspective, that mapped the alliance ties between "radical organizations" in the two cities. While these groups appeared to be densely connected to each other in Glasgow, they were only sparsely linked in Bristol (Diani 2011: 81–82). This suggested an alternative interpretation for the differences in the two cities' public perception: even in the early 2000s, a long time away from the heyday of local radicalism, Glasgow looked more radical than Bristol, not because of a larger presence of actors (in this case, organizations) willing to engage in confrontational protest, but because its "radicals" were extensively connected to each other. In turn, this entailed a greater ability to act together and mount protest campaigns, a more distinct presence in the local civil society, and a higher probability of being perceived by friends and foes in the larger public as a distinctive collective actor. Rather than the sheer number of radical actors, it was their connectedness that made Glasgow "radicals" visible, and marked the difference between the two cities.

While this example refers to organizations rather than individuals, it provides nonetheless a useful illustration of two divergent approaches to the study of political participation. One is often referred to as "variable-based" (Abbott 1998; Emirbayer 1997). It focuses on the traits of the actors as summarized in variables, and on the relations between such variables. According to its most basic version, the properties of any collective process are best identified by looking at the distribution of the properties of the actors involved in it. For example, studying a social movement implies starting by looking for those actors (whether individuals or organizations) whose traits best fit our definition of that movement (see e.g., in reference to environmental movements, Dalton 1994).

The other perspective outlined here is a particular version of a set of approaches that are usually referred to as "relational" (Crossley 2011; Fuhse 2015, 2018). It starts from the patterns of ties that connect actors in a particular system of interdependence. What defines the peculiarity of a collective process is not only—definitely, not primarily—the profile of actors involved, but the relations between them. It is of course relevant to know actors' dominant traits, but it is the particular configuration of their ties, and the way such ties are constructed and interpreted, that really matters. As the two British cities suggest, we may have collective action settings in which the actors are very similar, yet the overall process appears to be very different, because of the variation in relational patterns. By this token, our search for a specific movement would imply first of all looking for those actors that, regardless of their characteristics, are involved in the relational mechanisms that qualify a social movement as opposed to other organizational forms (see e.g., Diani 1995). For example, in the case of environmentalism, we might have environmental organizations, but no environmental movements, if those organizations acted on their own, without engaging in any larger web of alliances with each other.

Of course, "relational" means many things. Like most—arguably, all—theoretical "turns" in the social sciences, also the "relational turn" over the last few decades has taken various forms. Charting them is well beyond the scope of this chapter (Crossley 2011; Depelteau 2018; Fuhse 2018). Instead, after providing a short summary of the basic tenets of relational approaches, the chapter will show how different versions of relational social science have guided our exploration of political participation. There are two important limits to what follows. First, examples will come primarily from analyses of participation in contentious collective action and politics, rather than mainstream political participation. However, that is not a problem inasmuch as the aim is to illustrate different logics of inquiry rather than to provide a thorough review of the field. For that, there are plenty of available alternatives (see e.g., if largely limited to US scholarship on political networks, Campbell 2013 and Victor, Montgomery, and Lubell 2017). Moreover, researchers with an interest in collective action have been among the key proponents of what is now often identified as the "relational turn" in social science (Mische 2011; Fuhse 2015). Second, little attention is paid to relational processes that take place in the virtual sphere. This is due to two main reasons: other chapters in this Handbook deal explicitly with the online dimensions of political participation (see in particular Earl and Kenski's and Santos and Valenzuela's); the same analytic dimensions that differentiate between relational approaches to offline interactions may guide our analysis of online ones (Bennett and Segerberg 2013; Pavan 2014; Milan 2015; Gonzalez-Bailon 2017).

Relational Approaches vs. Variable-Based Approaches

At the core of the relational "turn" of the 1990s was the attempt to redirect social science away from classic dichotomies that had shaped previous discussions. In his "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology," Emirbayer (1997: 282) noted how "[t]he key question confronting sociologists in the present day is not 'material versus ideal,' 'structure versus agency,' 'individual versus society,' or any of the other dualisms so often noted; rather, it is the choice between substantialism and relationalism." Along similar lines, Crossley (2011) identified in particular in the individualism vs. holism polarity the major obstacle to establish a relational perspective.

Substantialist approaches take as their point of departure the notion that it is substances of various kinds (things, beings, essences) that constitute the fundamental units of all inquiry. The dominance of this view is such that one can arguably find its correspondence in the very structure of Western language (Emirbayer 1997: 282–83; also see Depelteau 2018: 11). However, when it comes to analyzing interactions, it is the properties of these entities, measured by variables, not the entities as such, that are the focus of the analysis. Hence the use of the expression "variable-centered approach" to characterize this perspective (Abbott 1998). As Emirbayer put it, "[W]hat decidedly do not do the acting in this perspective are the substances in question; all of the relevant action takes place among them—they provide merely the empty settings within which causation occurs—rather than being generated by them. If anything, it is the variable attributes themselves that 'act,' that supply initiative" (Emirbayer 1997: 286). It is worth noting that this is not a prerogative of approaches focused on the individual actor and its logics. While methodological individualism and rational action theories heavily rely on the language of variables, so do approaches based on values as determinants of action (Emirbayer 1997: 284), or attempts to characterize whole social systems in reference to the distribution of certain properties.

For all its variants, the relational response to substantialism and variable-based approaches has been based on some shared tenets. In addition to the *rejection of dualisms*, Depelteau (2018: 17–18) identified three basic traits of relational approaches. The first refers to the choice of *interdependences rather than entities as the preferred focus* for the analysis: “The most appropriate analytic unit for the scientific study of social life is the network of social relations and interactions between actors (both human and corporate)” (Crossley 2011: 1). Accordingly, society is best seen as “constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power” (Mann 1986, cited in Emirbayer 1997). Some go even further and replace the term “society” with “relational setting,” defined as “a patterned matrix of institutional relationships among cultural, economic, social, and political practices” (Somers 1994, cited in Emirbayer 1997).

A second distinctive element of relationalism is *processual thinking*. Focusing on processes has important implications for our understanding of actors. In an enlightening comparison of the relational and the mechanism approach, Abbott (2007) notes how actors emerge out of particular combinations of relations that make some properties turn into active boundaries to the detriment of others. In other words, it is not the fixed properties of an entity that define it but the process which makes such properties salient. Along similar lines, Crossley argues that “the key properties of social actors, as identified in much social science and philosophy, are not primordial properties of the biological organism but rather capacities and dispositions acquired in and sustained through interaction” (2011: 2).

Finally, yet another important feature is the co-production of social phenomena through interaction between human and non-human entities. From the point of view of collective action theories, standard applications of actor–network theory have been rare (for one exception, see Rodríguez-Giralt, Marrero-Guillamón, and Milstein 2018). However, there has been recurrent attention to how the involvement of multiple agents in specific events, public spaces, or meeting arenas may affect the constitution of actors and shape collective processes (see e.g., Polletta 1999; Haug 2013; Knoke et al. 2021: Chap. 6). A network imagery has even been applied to explore the interdependence between discourse and public events, without placing agents in the center stage (e.g., Diani and Kousis 2014). Events may operate as channels of communication between otherwise disconnected actors; discourses may weave otherwise disconnected events into broader narratives; and so on.[1]

Despite partial overlaps between different authors’ positions, however, it is difficult to identify a fully coherent version of relational social science. In fact, relational mechanisms are assigned a quite different role in different accounts of political processes. In this chapter I will focus on three of them. First, we will see how relational data are incorporated as additional variables into fairly standard, variable-based analyses of political participation. In that case, the level of individual embeddedness in specific relations will be taken as an additional predictor of individual behavior. Then, we will see how the relational patterns in which individual agents are embedded combine to define the properties of collectivities and affect their overall performance as well as individual agents’ conduct. From that perspective, relations and actors will still be neatly differentiated. Finally, we will look at some approaches which emphasize how actors themselves are constituted through relational processes, somehow overcoming the distinction between actors and networks. The conclusions will provide a summary of the main analytic tensions that still characterize relational approaches.

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[1] Unsurprisingly, students of interactions in the digital sphere have paid a lot of attention to these processes, see among many others Pavan (2014) and Milan (2015).

Incorporating Relationality into Variable-Based Approaches

After pioneering work by Lazarsfeld and his associates in the 1950s, the relational approach to politics was abandoned by the growth of survey data and emphasis on independent sampling but has got back in favor since the 1990s (Zuckerman 2005). Many relational approaches to individual participation focus on the processes which provide incentives, opportunities, and constraints for action. In many of these studies, network properties, measured at the individual (node) level, have been brought into standard statistical models as independent variables (see e.g., Zuckerman, Valentino, and Zuckerman 1994). A classic question has been, for example, the extent to which the composition of ego-networks[2] may affect voting behavior, and whether the heterogeneity of such networks impacts differently on people with different strengths of political beliefs (Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2005). Survey data including relational measures have also been used to test arguments about the growing individualization of voting and participation. Data have shown, after controlling for individual traits and predispositions, social influence from networks to have a constant impact on a number of political actions. Notably, such influence is not exerted solely by family or close friends but often also by relatively weaker contacts (Levine 2005).

The tendency to use network data as part of explanatory models based on standard regression has also been popular among analysts of social movements and grassroots political participation. For example, using the Freedom Summer dataset, McAdam looked at the number of previous contacts to other participants as a predictor of participation in the campaign (McAdam 1986). He quickly moved to more sophisticated arguments about the encouraging and discouraging effects of ties, or the location of activists within organizational fields (McAdam and Paulsen 1993). Moved by similar concerns, analysts of mainstream political participation have long tried to go beyond individuals' immediate contacts, and assess instead how political behavior is affected by the properties of the larger network in which an individual is embedded (e.g., Giugni and Grasso 2019). The reasoning being that individuals' decisions may be affected by—and may also affect—longer chains of influence that through their acquaintances reach out to the latter's contacts. Accordingly, it makes sense to look for the properties of networks taken as a whole, to check if they are disconnected or not, the average distance between nodes, the role of intermediaries, etc. (see e.g., Fowler 2005).

The basic feature of these and related approaches, however, remained unchanged: namely, measures of network embeddedness (measures of relations) were introduced as additional variables in order to generate more realistic models of behavior. This remains to date the dominant feature of studies exploring the link between networks and individual participation (Tindall 2015; Rolfe and Chan 2017; Santoro and Beck 2017). Dissatisfaction with this approach has prompted at least two types of responses, linked to analytic sociology and constructivism, respectively.

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[2] An ego-network consists of a central node, "ego," its alters, i.e., the nodes directly connected to it, and the relations among the latter (Borgatti, Everett, and Johnson 2013: Ch. 15).

Analytic Relationalism

The late Roger Gould's (1991, 1993, 1995) work on the role of networks in the 1871 Paris Commune moved from a criticism of treatments of network properties as variables at the individual level, according to which network effects were estimated by counting the social ties in which individuals were involved, and using these counts as interval variables in regression equations (Gould 1991: 716). As an alternative, Gould proposed a structural–relational approach, focused on network structure and multiplexity. This enabled him to address two issues: whether the Commune was a class or an urban uprising, and what factors accounted for different levels of insurgency in Parisian neighborhoods. Regarding the first issue, it had long been suggested that the Commune was a class movement based on artisanal activism (Gould 1995: 3–4): according to this view, trade solidarities supported and enabled urban class struggles, as craft identities and loyalties mattered a lot even though artisanal economic activities were already in decline. Gould's alternative interpretation suggested that the emergence of a broader collective identity, that some viewed as generalized class consciousness, did not depend on craft solidarities, but on neighborhood ties that linked members of different trade groups living in the same area.

Gould showed that while the 1848 uprising was a class conflict opposing workers to capitalism, 1871 was in fact an urban conflict between urban dwellers and the French state. There is no denying that most of the 1871 *communards* were indeed industrial workers, nor that the French state was a strong supporter of capitalism. But the patterns of relation between the insurgents showed that it was communal ties that mattered more than class ones. Solidarity along craft lines seemed to have worked well for industrial action in the previous decade, but neighborhood solidarity turned out to be the most important predictor of levels of insurgence for disruptive collective action aimed at seizing political control of a specific territory (Gould 1993). This reflected in different demands—*droit au travail* in 1848, betrayal of Paris by the French state after defeat in the war, and conflict between Paris and the Versailles government in 1871 (Gould 1995: 6).

Gould's work provides a perfect illustration of a genuine switch from aggregative towards relational approaches, and of the advantages that can derive from it. In aggregative terms, the opposite camps would have been described as class based as they largely consisted of people from the same class; in relational terms, however, the ties with an impact on the levels of mobilization of the different *arrondissements* were marriage and community ties. The same point was also clear in another major piece of analysis, that looked at the interplay of organizational networks and social networks based on neighborhood solidarities (Gould 1991). Successful mobilization depended not on the sheer number of ties, but on the interplay between social ties created by insurgent organizations and pre-existing social networks rooted in Parisian neighborhoods. Organizational networks maintained solidarity because they were structured along neighborhood lines. At the same time, if a certain number of insurgents from one neighborhood were active in another neighborhood battalion that expressed higher levels of resistance, then this would start mechanisms of cross-neighborhood influence that would also prove conducive to higher levels of engagement. Once again, it was the configuration of networks, not the number of connections, that mattered.

The need to look beyond the sheer amount of ties is also evident in another classic piece of work—Peter Hedstrom's analysis of the diffusion processes that led to the establishment of the social democratic party in Sweden (SDP) at the turn of the twentieth century (Hedstrom, Sandell, and Stern 2000; also see Hedstrom 1994). Hedstrom and his co-authors focus on the role of agitators who traveled across the country to set up party branches. In doing so, they created a meso-level network form of organization. In their words, a meso-level network

> differs in three important respects from interpersonal microlevel networks directly linking prior and potential adopters of a practice to one another: (1) it is generated by a different causal process than the microlevel network, (2) it tends to be much sparser than the microlevel network, and (3) the typical edge of a mesolevel network bridges much longer sociometric and geographic distances than the typical edge of a microlevel network. Mesolevel networks are likely to have similar effects on diffusion processes as the small-world networks analyzed by Duncan Watts. (Hedstrom, Sandell, and Stern 2000: 146)

The reference to small-world networks (Watts 1999; Baldassarri and Diani 2007) is crucial. If party agitators had gradually moved to neighboring provinces the paths to reach all areas in the country would have been very long. Instead, while mechanisms of transmission were indeed affected by territorial distance between districts, agitators did not follow a strictly territorial path of diffusion. They rather created structures giving priority to districts with a larger share of workers and union members, who were supposed to be more favorable towards the SDP. This generated an organizational structure in which what mattered was not primarily the density of ties but rather the presence of a few nodes able to connect through short paths other sections of the network (a small world in Watts' sense).

Another illustration of the shift from an aggregative to a relational approach can be found in the analysis of organizational fields of collective action, and in particular of the role of individuals as sources of connectivity within them (Diani 1995, 2015). The ties created by activists through their multiple memberships have been shown to be an important predictor of interorganizational collaborations (Diani 2003); their distribution has been regarded as an important mechanism of "boundary definition," inasmuch as the fact of sharing core members points at specific links of solidarity and mutual recognition between participatory organizations (Diani 2015). In particular, relatively dense networks of activists have been treated as an essential components of two types of modes of coordination: a "social movement mode," characterized by dense multiplex networks of both interpersonal and interorganizational ties; and a "subcultural/communitarian mode," in which organizations are either missing or disconnected from each other, and the connectivity within a field rests entirely on activists' interpersonal ties (Diani 2015: Chap. 2; also see Eggert 2014). One implication of Diani's approach is that "social movement organizations" are no longer defined by specific properties, but by the fact of occupying a distinct structural position within collective action fields. Accordingly, social movement transformation does not necessarily mean the transformation of the characteristics of specific organizations involved in them; it may also consist primarily of a change in relational patterns, for example a greater inclination by organizations to act on their own rather than engage in sustained alliances (Diani 2012, 2015: Chap. 9).

A parallel attempt to shift attention towards relational processes has been the *Dynamics of Contention* (Doc) program (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Relational mechanisms are one of three broad classes of mechanisms, alongside environmental and cognitive mechanisms, that may account in variable combinations for a range of specific collective processes. As its proponents argue, while coming from a structuralist tradition, they recognize

> the necessity of taking strategic interaction, consciousness, and historically accumulated culture into account. We treat social interaction, social ties, communication, and conversation not merely as expressions of structure, rationality, consciousness, or culture but as active sites of creation and change. We have come to think of interpersonal networks, interpersonal communication, and various forms of continuous negotiation—including the negotiation of identities—as figuring centrally in the dynamics of contention. (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 22)

Relational mechanisms are those that affect the connections between different social sites—which may consist of people, groups, or interpersonal networks. Mechanisms such as brokerage, diffusion, and coordination contribute not only to the coordination of resource exchanges but to the creation and overcoming of social boundaries and the definition of identities (also see Tilly 2005). The proximity between the Doc program and the relational perspective is highest in two aspects: the attention paid to the historical dimension and the processual element; and the recognition of the interdependence between events and collective actors which enables analysts to identify crucial events in contentious processes, and their impact on subsequent interactions.

The Doc program has inspired a number of studies which explicitly take relational dynamics into account in order to explain major features of contention. One important example is a study of radicalization in cases like al-Qaeda, the Italian Red Brigades, or the Greek Cypriot paramilitary organization EOKA by Alimi, Demetriou, and Bosi (2015). However, given their focus on organizational, rather than individual, behavior, such studies are peripheral to the topic of this chapter. Doc's relationalism has had an ambiguous relationship to network analytic methods. While both McAdam (Fernandez and McAdam 1989; McAdam and Paulsen 1993) and Tilly (Tilly and Wood 2003) have used network analytic tools in the past, the Doc program's strongest point is in linking relational thinking to the processual dimension, rather than bringing SNA squarely into the picture (Diani 2007; Krinsky and Mische 2013). McAdam in particular has parted company with network analysis since the early 2000s (McAdam 2003; Fligstein and McAdam 2012) in favor of a strategic version of relationality.

Constructivist Relationalism

Under the broad category of "constructivist relationalism" we can identify a number of approaches that emphasize the role of cultural and symbolic production not only in shaping interactions between actors, but also in constituting the actors themselves. They do so with variable foci, sometimes centered on the activists' experience, other times looking primarily at the broader relational spaces (fields, arenas, worlds) in which various actors operate. Illustrative of the former is Passy and Monsch's (2020) approach to relationality as a set of practices that shape the activist mind. They recognize that activists often develop attitudes and motivations after joining a group and start interacting with fellow activists. However, they also stress that there are relational processes that contribute to shaping the activist mind, namely, a cognitive schema and a set of predispositions that result in certain people being prone to action across different phases of their lives, and indifferent to contingencies/ opportunities. They bring back the role of values and fundamental beliefs (e.g., p. 5) while looking at the process of "synchronization of minds," that is, the conversational interaction through which shared meanings are produced. They are interested in these processes not only at the moment of recruitment but also during action, and in the interplay between individual trajectories and the commitment communities in which they are embedded.

Passy and Monsch (2020) draw upon social psychology as well as interactionist sociology to explore the set of cognitive processes that orient an individual's action, which in turn affects one's mind, in ways which are domain specific. While they still focus on individual behavior, they go beyond variable-based models and conduct in-depth interviews to reconstruct activists' life histories and careers as well as to explore their understandings of common good (Passy and Monsch 2020: Chap. 1). The authors' approach is also relational in that they focus on how activists join, through participation in organizations or campaigns, "commitment communities," where new cultural interpretations are forged by the means of conversation and sustained interaction (Passy and Monsch 2020: Chap. 2).

Interactions may occur in specific relational spaces inhabited by multiple actors. These are from time to time defined as "fields," "arenas," or "worlds." Several studies have proposed relational approaches that focus precisely on recognizing the importance of such spaces. Among recent efforts in that direction is Paul Lichterman's (2021) attempt to identify the cultural codes and the scripts that guide action and network-building in collective action fields. Lichterman (2021) develops a model of civic action that follows, without necessarily recognizing it, in the steps of earlier work by Melucci (1984, 1996), acknowledging the plurality of motives and representations of reality that can be found within any collective actor. His work on advocacy organizations on housing in LA explores the multiple forms taken by civic action, namely, voluntary, collective work to address problems of broad interest. The focus shifts from "actors who do things" to "different kinds of doing together"; that is, to the practices through which meaning is built and adapted, and relations assume particular characteristics. Civic action develops in discursive fields (Lichterman 2021: 32–33) where the limits of discussion are set by some fundamental categories in which different styles may prevail or combine. "Styles are mostly taken-for-granted, shared expectations about how to do things together, and how to relate to each other and participate" (Lichterman 2021: 26). They may define communities of interest, focused on specific issues, and mobilize around them anybody potentially attracted, or communities of identity, focused on preserving their boundaries against external threats. Lichterman's (2021) approach has no attention for the specific relational patterns that may emerge out of interactions. His version of relationalism is rather focused on the cultural structures (what he calls "styles") that interactions may generate, rather than on the systematic mapping of network maps through network analytic tools.

The most sustained attempt to recognize the inextricable connection between cultural production and social relations may be found in the networks of scholars that developed around the work of Harrison White (White, Boorman, and Breiger 1976; White 2008; Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer 1997; Mische 2011; Fuhse 2015). Drawing upon a combination of network analytic perspectives and American pragmatism they pointed out how culture is not only generated by relations but is actually constitutive of relations, as it is not possible to conceive of a tie without the activity of cultural production that brings people to recognize it as such (Mische 2003).

One member of Harrison Whyte's circle, Ann Mische (2008), stands out for applying her relational perspective to specific instances of contention. She looked in particular at the role of specific activists in bridging different sectors of civil society and facilitating the integration of collective action fields in broad campaigns and movements. Her case study was student mobilizations in Brazil between the late 1980s and early 1990s, that culminated in the 1992 campaign to topple president Collor on corruption charges. There were several lines of potential fragmentation in the field of student politics at the time. One was determined by the different party allegiances of student activists, with the movement potentially reflecting partisan divisions; another consisted of the fracture between partisan and non-partisan, "civic" politics, and the characterization of the student movement as non-partisan was precisely the rhetorical tool that allowed to keep partisan hostilities low, and prevent fragmentation, even though this was not always successful.

The role of activists as brokers, connecting non-communicating sections of the movement, is analyzed by Mische (2008) using network concepts but with special focus on the cultural processes through which ties were constituted. Mische (2008) highlights the multiple roles of student leaders, at the same time actors that contributed to institution building and to broad coalitions but who also gave voice to radical, controversial positions. In doing so they reflected the multiple organizational identities in which they are embedded. Even the moments of unity like the 1992 Collor campaign were inevitably short lived, and a lot of communicative work was needed to enable these broad coalitions to form and survive. Not only that, Mische (2008) points at the necessary role of parties, and rejects clear-cut dichotomies between partisan and civic organizations and spheres.

Mische (2008) further explores the different communicative strategies that were used to create bridges between different sectors of fields. She develops a typology of "modes of communication" based on two dimensions: "the degree of competition vs collaboration, and the focus on ideas versus actions (or alternatively, on elaboration versus deliberation)" (Mische 2008: 29). This generates four types, "exploratory dialogue, discursive positioning, reflecting problem solving, and tactical maneuver. These modes of communication are loosely associated with the ideas of Habermas, Gramsci, Dewey, and Machiavelli" (ibidem). Neither groups nor activists were anchored to one mode but shifted between them in the effort to address (and create) different type of publics.

Mische's (2008) approach builds on Simmel's (1955) concept of intersection of social circles, and its reformulation by Breiger (1974) as duality of persons and groups, to explore activist identities as a reflection of the network of memberships they go through over time. These intersections define multisectoral fields:

> relations between institutional sectors as shaped by the careers of individuals moving through those sectors. The concept of 'field' is both structural and cultural; it refers to how actors are positioned in social space by their relations and affiliations, as well as how they endow those relations with meaning through mutual orientation and discursive positioning. (Mische 2008: 43)

In a rare analysis of a cultural movement, Crossley's (2015) study of the emergence of the punk music scene in late 1970s UK displays an original combination of intellectual perspectives that are often regarded as scarcely compatible, like pragmatism, Bourdieu's sociology, and network analysis. In doing so Crossley (2015) establishes since the very beginning a parallel in the mechanisms driving the emergence of punk and those behind other instances of collective action. While punk was indeed very critical of social inequality and power asymmetries, possibly more than other cultural movements, still Crossley's (2015) work effectively bridges the analysis of social and cultural movements.

In Crossley's (2015) version of relational sociology "actors are constrained by their relations with others and their position in wider social networks. Networks form a social structure which generates opportunities and constraints for its members, a structure which those members may maneuver and jostle for position within but which they cannot extricate themselves from" (Crossley 2015: 13). Following the dominant terminology among analysts of culture, Crossley speaks of "worlds" (Becker 1982) rather than "fields." Worlds consist of (a) a subcommunity of actors within a larger community context; (b) with shared attributes/interest and homophily; (c) a distinct style/set of codes, cultural traits, and collective identity (Crossley 2015: 22). Nodes in punk networks are individuals, identified through a number of sources, connected by linkages that are either embedded in long-time friendships, pre-existing music, or in direct artistic collaboration. In order to reconstruct such ties, Crossley (2015) relies on a variety of sources beyond interviews, including (auto)biographies and available reports from that era. This enables him to take systematically into account the time dimension, and patterns of network evolution. Another distinctive feature is the attention paid to specific spaces/venues as important hubs for the creation of ties between musicians and other figures of the emerging scene. Beyond the substantive relevance of punk as a critical cultural movement, Crossley's (2015) work actually provides a useful template for the exploration of individual roles in any kind of relational space.

Mische's, Lichterman's, and Crossley's works by no means exhaust the spectrum of analyses highlighting the contribution of individuals to the constitution of collective action fields (see e.g., Haunss and Leach 2009; Pavan 2012; Duyvendak and Fillieule 2015). However, they provide a sufficiently broad illustration of how interactions rooted in discursive and symbolic practices shape the settings in which collective action develops.

Conclusions

Researchers who identify with a relational approach share some assumptions, which differentiates them from reductionist, variable-based approaches exclusively focused on the individual. At the same time, they also differ on important issues, which may hamper the consolidation of these approaches. The first difference may be associated with the nature of the actors: while some think of them as purely defined by the interaction patterns in which they are embedded (e.g., Abbott 2007), others conceive of actors as having a distinct profile shaped by their socio-demographic traits and their social roles, despite paying strong attention to relational dynamics in their analyses (e.g., Hedstrom et al. 2000; Gould 1991, 1993).

A second tension refers to the different conceptions of what represents a tie. Some relational approaches are focused on fluid interactions and the mutable representations of experience that such interactions generate (e.g., Jasper 2015); others try to differentiate, to variable degrees, between more volatile interactions and more permanent, or at least recurrent, social relations, recognizing that interactions can somehow consolidate in patterns

(Duyvendak and Fillieule 2015; Diani 2015). Approaches like Gould's may be considered relational to the extent that they do not explain behavior exclusively, nor primarily, in the light of the actors' characteristics. Many of the interactionists/constructivists would not regard them as relational, as what is missing is the focus on dynamic interactions. Still, it would be a mistake to reduce "relation" to "interaction." In fact, "relation" has a more stable dimension that is often ignored by "relational" sociologists. And one should always acknowledge the possibility that sustained interactions generate more stable structural patterns (Depelteau 2018: 19–20).

This points at possibly the most ambiguous issue, namely, the definition of social relation. Sometimes the same word is used to denotate different types of ties. For example, Emirbayer (1997) and others, drawing upon Dewey, refer to "transactions" as a relational form with a strong normative element while others (e.g., Lemieux 1998; Diani 2015) refer to transactions as mainly driven by short-term, tactical calculations, as opposed to deeper social relations. Despite widespread references to Dewey as a source of inspiration, terms like interactions and transactions/relations are often used interchangeably (see e.g., Depelteau 2018; Crossley 2016). Similarly diverse are the terms used to designate the relational spaces in which interactions take place. Concepts like "field" suggest relatively stable patterns of relations in both Bourdieu's (1992: 94–114) or DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) versions (also see Fligstein and McAdam 2012), while concepts such as "arenas" are privileged by analysts focusing on the fluidity of interactions (Jasper 2015). As we have just seen, concepts like "worlds," borrowed from analysts of the art worlds (Becker 1982), are in turn particularly popular among analysts of cultural movements and prefigurative politics (Crossley 2015; Haunss and Leach 2009).

Regarding methods, the main divide runs in particular about the use of social network analysis, with advocates including the likes of Hedstrom (1994); Hedstrom, Sandell, and Stern (2000); Gould (1995); Diani (2015); Crossley (2015); Mische (2008); Mische and Pattison (2000), and Haunss (2013), and skeptics the likes of Emirbayer and Goodwin (1994), Fligstein and McAdam (2012), Abbott (2007), and Lichterman (2021). The recourse to mixed methods, combining quantitative and qualitative data (see e.g., Crossley 2015; Diani 2015), might address the need to combine thick descriptions of key players with systematic accounts of larger structures.

Finally, more work is needed to bring systematically into the picture dimensions of space and time, which are central to approaches rooted in pragmatism (see e.g., Abbott 1998 or Crossley 2011 in sociology; Sacchetti 2015 in institutional economics). In the British example with which we started this chapter, space was at least partially taken into account, while time was not. The absence of a time dimension is particularly problematic for studies drawing upon network analytic methods, and represents a major challenge for the years ahead. Hopefully, the consolidation of data-mining tools in digital historical research (see e.g., Mertel et al. 2021) will provide a big boost to this type of inquiry.

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CHAPTER 12

MARXIST APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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"Marxism" is a complex and contested term. Karl Marx and his lifelong collaborator, Friedrich Engels—political refugees, radical journalists, socialist organizers, and theorists—did not produce a systematic body of *writing*: much of their work was political or philosophical polemic, written to order, unfinished or even contained in correspondence, and scholars routinely prefer, as this chapter does, to discuss what is generally recognized (with whatever nuances) as the broad coherence of their underlying theoretical positions, scattered across many different kinds of text. "Marxism" is then the later attempt to articulate and systematize these positions in various ways, by activists and academics in different times and places.

Moreover, one of these key tenets is the historically conditioned character of social and political relationships; universalizing and eternalizing statements about institutional specifics are therefore typically rejected. All of this makes for a challenging, but as this chapter aims to show immensely versatile, body of thought, which developed in dialogue with popular attempts to assert power through democratic revolutions and labor organizing, anti-colonial struggles and socialist internationalism, and many another social movement since (Barker et al. 2014).

In Marx's day, thought about politics, economics, and culture typically operated in separate theoretical spaces. A key feature of his work is to seek to relocate all of these within what we would now call society, and to refuse analyses which seek to present them as self-sufficient or isolated:

> In the social production of their life, human beings enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.
>
> The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not human beings' consciousness that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.

> … a distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic—in short, ideological forms in which human beings become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. (*1859 Preface* 1859)

Yet even as Marx refuses to consider "the political" in isolation from the whole society and the whole human being, political participation—or rather the potential for participation, the barriers in its way and people's struggles to overcome these barriers—can be said to be the central theme of his work from the young Marx's concern with the nature of human agency (*Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, 1844), to his final notes exploring the workings of non-class-based societies (*Ethnological Notebooks*, 1973), and from his exploration of how capitalist relationships present the illusion of freedom masking the iron constraints of exploitation (*Capital vol I*, 1867), to his writings on the revolutions of his day (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, 1852, *The Civil War in France*, 1871).

Hence the Marxist concern with political participation—as with so many Marxist contributions—cuts across and through many of the conventional disciplinary and institutional forms within which routine intellectual work seeks to understand it and political routines seek to channel it. This is at once the value and the challenge of Marxist approaches: they do not sit comfortably within other frameworks, and cannot easily be cherrypicked to provide neatly bounded contributions—but they are extraordinarily powerful in placing center-stage the people and problems that fade to the margins of other approaches.

This historical and relational approach means that Marxist contributions on political participation (and much else) can be best formulated as *questions*: simultaneously theoretical questions about the construction of a specific social formation, and empirical questions about how popular involvement in collective decision-making attempts to express itself within that formation (Barker 2021). Rather than dogmatic propositions, Marxism thus offers a sharp tool to cut deeply, from immediate appearances to underlying relationships.

A first question is then: participation in what? A perspective which starts from noting that formal states of any kind characterize only a short fragment of the human record, and that states which derive legitimacy from participation (however fictitiously) only mark a small section within that fragment, will not assume that participation in the polity is a normal condition, or necessarily a normative endpoint—as against, say, the "withering away" of the state which Marx and Engels foresaw after private control over everyday life was overcome (*Anti-Dühring*, Engels 1878). Instead, Marxism starts from the presupposition that human beings are irreducibly social, so that its notion of participation is ultimately shaped by this, rather than by the official structures of actually existing states or the normative claims of democratic theory.

We can then ask: How, in a particular (historically conditioned) kind of society, do people participate in their shared life, how are they barred from doing so, and what new forms of participation emerge from their struggles around this? There can be very different answers to this. To note this complexity, and to explore what practical definitions and forms of participation eventually won out either as official forms of politics or as enduring challenges to this definition, is a useful antidote to eternalizing particular institutional forms, or taking particular political ideologies as a starting point.

This example points us towards a second dimension of the Marxist analysis of participation: it is grounded in a complex sense of human needs as historical and developmental, and as representing a contested diversity, both within the individual but also across society. At any given time in a particular class society, we can expect to find struggles for participation centered around the immediate relationships of people's daily work and lives, and so ask, "Who decides in the workplace or the family, the neighborhood or the religious community?" We will also find struggles that are more consciously about the wider relationships of a city (ancient Rome or industrial Manchester), a country (France in 1789 or the USA in 2022) or the world (the revolutionary waves of 1848, 1916–23, 1968, or 2011, for example).

This is not, obviously, an elitist stagism of the kind Brecht satirized as "Erst kommt das Fressen, dann die Moral" [first comes feeding, then morality]. Marxists are equally interested in uncovering the much more local interests that educated groups may dress up in the high-flying language of abstract politics, and in disentangling the ways in which the poor and oppressed, from their vantage-point outside certain kinds of illusions, attempt both to grasp and to change the society they live in. Furthermore, much of the practice of Marxist politics consists in things like challenging attempts to reduce the diversity of needs expressed in labor struggles to easily manageable demands around wages alone; or in seeking to infuse abstract languages of democracy or ecology with the practical content of social justice.

Thirdly, the Marxist interest in participation treats the fit between institutions and human needs as inherently problematic—at least within class societies. It asks, obviously, how the forms of bourgeois democracy frustrate the expression of popular needs for "real democracy," as the global movement wave of 2011 put it—and the many ways, not all of them obvious to outside observers, with which people seek to change this situation and assert power from below: "All forms of the state have democracy for their truth, and for that reason are false to the extent that they are not democracy" (*Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, 1843*).

It also asks how new forms of political power garner consent through particular kinds of participation—peasant support for Napoleon III's plebiscites and flag-waving, for example—and attempt to repress others (Haussmann's reconstruction of Paris which did not, in the end, prevent the Commune of 1871).

All of this, of course, makes Marxism a powerful tool for enquiring about *what is going on* in times of change like the present, when we see new spaces of conflict (around lockdowns or social media), changing polities (with the rise of new authoritarianisms reversing the 50-year trend towards liberal democracies), new kinds of actor (from schoolchildren's strikes to QAnon adherents), and—for now—uncertain outcomes. Social change has also forced the discussion of established institutions to include questions such as the relationship between social class and the vote for particular parties, or the conflictual relationships of workplace power, so that many non-Marxist approaches have had to take these on board (e.g. Giugni and Grasso 2019), even when badly mishandling them at times (treating educational level as a proxy for class position, for example). But Marxism's wider perspective on participation—as *social* and not merely political, as *historical* rather than taking local institutional forms for granted, as *developmental* and as *contested*—remains an unparalleled tool for reflection.

This chapter traces Marxist thought on political participation from Marx and Engels' time to the present, as it has developed alongside popular struggles for real participation in collective decision-making—and the changing shapes of post-*ancien régime* polities that have attempted to repress, contain, or even enable it.

The Development of Marxist Thinking about Participation

Marx and Engels, like many subsequent Marxist authors, were not writing in a world dominated by stable liberal parliamentary democracies with unchallenged institutional frameworks. In the chaos and contradictions of Marx's Europe, Lenin's Russia, Luxemburg's Poland and Germany, or Gramsci's Italy, we find far less stably structured political institutions than postwar sociology and political science tended to assume. When Marxism was read through this latter prism, the hope was often to find neat correlations operating at specific organizational levels, and Marxism's contributions were fragmented across what were seen as different "levels," structured by the agency of capital, the state, and dominant cultural forms (Miliband 1982).

Marxist thought on political participation, however, starts from a different place. While the Romantic tradition led Marx and Engels to start by asking how the majority of people could become active political subjects and what the most significant barriers to that were, as democrats in the radical nineteenth-century sense (aiming for rule by the whole of the people rather than by aristocracy or a limited middle-class franchise) they became centrally concerned with the question of how popular power could be achieved and sustained—but recognizing that these struggles regularly produced institutional compromises which conditioned popular political participation in the future.

Thus, what gives the Marxist tradition of reflection on political participation coherence is its insistence on the question of "How do people participate in actually existing politics?" in a wide variety of contexts and in many forms, from voting to revolutions and from social movements to Bonapartist populism, as well as the question, "How could this situation be transformed?" As political activists, Marx and Engels were typically discussing the immediate specificities of particular institutional arrangements (the French state facing revolution, the British struggle over the length of the working day, the US Civil War), and later activists and scholars have had to extrapolate from these when thinking about other times and places.

Both in the radical-Romantic question of the barriers to full (political) subjectivity and in the radical-democratic question of the potential for popular power, Marxist perspectives are programmatically relational, asking about how human beings who are exploited and oppressed by others can come together to challenge and remake the overall social structures (economic, political, cultural) which connect them.

The Development of Marxist Thought on Political Participation

The fundamental thought here is that while social relations construct social positions—worker and capitalist, peasant and landlord, etc.—around the exploitation of labor power, labor power also consists of *people*. As Lebowitz (2003) underlines, there is then also a "political economy of labour," the necessary construction from below of relationships of solidarity, often on a very micro-level—family, neighborhood, town—or around specifics—the union, the consumer cooperative, the social club.

These, and the forms of thought that articulate self-organization from below, constitute the slow articulation of the proletariat (those who own nothing but their labor power) as a *subject*, from a "class in itself" into a "class for itself," or in other terms some development of collective class consciousness (Mann 1973) and varying levels of struggle, from workplace "custom and practice" all the way up to revolution (Cox 2013). Marx discusses this dimension of political participation in the related concepts of development of class consciousness and class struggle: "Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers . . ." (*The Communist Manifesto,* Marx and Engels 1848).

At "higher levels" we then see more general attempts to articulate an understanding of society and a strategy to change it (the political party, the trade union federation, the radical newspaper) and various kinds of uprising—the English Chartists (Thompson 1984) and Irish Fenians (Anderson 2010), the Paris Commune (Ross 2016) and Atlantic slave revolts (Høgsbjerg 2013). This is what gives force to the central principle of Marx's politics, one which distances him fundamentally from Weberians: "The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves . . . the struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule . . ." (*Rules of the First International*, 1864).

Only towards the very end of Marx's life, with the growing power of the German Social Democratic Party in particular, did it become possible to imagine a temporarily stable relationship between an organized proletariat and a state which allowed it some limited space for self-expression, albeit conditioned by repression and the limited power of the Reichstag. Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875) attempted to engage with this new situation. We have inherited a fossilized relationship between "Marxists" and "anarchists" organized around the opposition between Marx's position as it appeared during the reorganization of states from the 1860s to the 1880s, and one which refused any engagement with the formal structures of the capitalist state (Kinna et al. 2013).

Nevertheless, on Marx's death in 1883 only four countries in the world had universal (and then only male) suffrage; Europe remained dominated by dynastic empires (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Russia); and the rest of the world was still being swallowed up by those empires and others (Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, Denmark), only some of which were even nominally democratic at home.

This contradiction—the restricted nature of bourgeois democracy (limited parliamentary powers; middle-class suffrage; women excluded); the continuing power of feudal relationships and established religion; imperial relations within Europe and beyond—came to a head in WWI. The votes for war in later 1914, which saw social-democratic parties across the continent support a war they had rightly denounced just a few months before as sending their members to die for kings and capitalists, did not mark the end of social democracy (which continued as a policy of limited redistribution within a capitalist and nationalist framework until such parties adopted neoliberal policies from the 1980s), but it did become impossible after this point to seriously believe that strategy did not matter.

World War I was in part brought to an end by the mutinies and desertions of workers and peasants in their new, lethal workplaces, as well as by strike waves, land occupations, and ultimately, revolutions, from India (Ramnath 2011) via Ireland to Russia and elsewhere. For a brief moment in 1919 it seemed as though this wave might win across the European continent, with soviets (councils of workers, peasants, soldiers, or sailors) in or close to power in many different countries; but the wave was largely defeated as the old ruling classes made alliances with new right-wing organizations (Mussolini's *fasci di combattimento*, later the Nazi Party, and so on).

Traditional reaction had aimed ultimately to restore an *ancien régime* in which ordinary people were simply not political subjects; the long nineteenth-century's democratic, nationalist, workers', peasants', and women's struggles had made this impossible—and the Romanovs were perhaps the last to attempt a purely reactionary strategy. Bonapartism represented the first right-wing recognition that the genie could not be put back in the lamp, and that nationalist and other forms of participation under ruling-class leadership were needed "in order for everything to remain the same" (Leopardi 2018). Fascism generalized this, using the organizational structures of mass popular participation pioneered by nineteenth-century working-class, feminist, and peasant mobilizations, but eviscerating their democratic (popular rule) component—and for rolling back the revolutionary wave of 1916–1923 it became a common strategy across the continent, in a "European civil war" (Pavone 2014) which reached its high point at Stalingrad in 1942, being thereafter progressively defeated by the state that came out of 1917, the bourgeois democratic states of the West, and popular resistance struggles of many kinds.

This situation—revolution followed by reaction, and the need to grasp the social relationships underlying the visible politics—is one which the founding generation of the Third International (those who opposed World War I and later supported the Russian Revolution) shared with the young Marx and Engels, whose humanist moment had encountered the defeats of 1848 and the "dull compulsion of economic necessity" (*Capital* vol. I, ch. 28: 1867), a movement reflected in part in the changing emphases of their writing and the increasing emphasis on the processes of capitalist economics.

Georg Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) reflects this change in its own chapters (written across the arc of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and its defeat), from the emphasis on the logic of how "class for itself" develops to a closer attention to the conservative power of reification. Antonio Gramsci similarly moved from the energy of the "Revolution against *Capital*" (Gramsci 1917) and the work of the Turin communist fraction in the two red years (1919–1920), via the disastrous split from the Socialist Party at Livorno in 1921 which left the communists a marginal force and failed to bring most working-class organizations with them, through the struggle against fascism up to his own incarceration in 1926 and the decade of the *Prison Notebooks* (Gramsci 1971).

The latter contain—among many other things—an account of the *potential* development of class-for-itself as "good sense," in conflict with a "common sense" (the mixture of official ideologies as represented in everyday culture) coming both from forms of traditional intellectual activity—not so much Great Ideas as the everyday work of the priest, doctor, or lawyer in handling distress and grievances—and the organic intellectual activity of managers, time-and-motion men, and the like. A crucial insight here is the *everyday*, apparently non-political power relations which then structure the direction of people's individual and collective agency.

Rosa Luxemburg and V. I. Lenin also consider this question of popular consciousness, but more from the point of view of the development of empirical institutions of popular power—whether the mass strike (Luxemburg 1906) or the various and hugely influential answers that Lenin gave to this question. From Kautsky, and the conditions of clandestine organizing within the Tsarist police state, Lenin argued that the working class could only achieve a certain degree of "trade union consciousness" by its own efforts, and needed the input of dissident bourgeois intellectuals; his contribution here was in particular to theorize and organize the Bolsheviks as the first real cadre party, marrying the organizing practice of early nineteenth-century conspiratorial insurrectionalism with the mass politics of the late nineteenth-century workers' movement. Nonetheless—as in *State and Revolution* (1917) and his willingness to learn from the Soviet experience—the upsurge in popular activism which he and Luxemburg experienced, rather than the defeat that Lukács and Gramsci faced, led him to emphasize the mistakes of the people over the wisest central committee, the key role of the development of popular consciousness as important in itself. As so often in Marxism, this contrasts *formal* political participation (the central committee of a party supposedly representing workers and peasants, or for that matter parliamentary democracy) with *substantive* participation.

From different directions, Gramsci, Luxemburg, the Irish revolutionary organizer James Connolly, and Lenin all engaged with the burning issue of dynastic empires and their (European) colonies. Gramsci had abandoned the Sardinian nationalism of his youth. Luxemburg, as a Polish-born Jewish woman who was not only a member of successive German parties but co-founded the Polish and Lithuanian social democratic party, was hostile to Polish nationalism. However Connolly (1910), a Scottish-born diaspora Irish Catholic, interpreted Ireland through the perspective of the equation between Catholicism and the nation forged by Daniel O'Connell. Lenin's critique of imperialism (and the rather different practice of the Bolsheviks in power) attempted to articulate possibilities for the even more complex Russian situation.

In post-Versailles Europe, and then in Asia and Africa, these questions came to be central, notably as revolutions after WWII were dominated by majority world struggles against European empires in which communists and socialists were often central, where inspiration was often sought from the Marxist tradition which many leading cadres had been trained in (often as diaspora students in Europe), and where alliances with the Soviet Union or, later, China might be on offer. All of this led to various forms of statist Marxism whose concern was very much (following Mao's example) to forge articulations between the party as an alternative elite geared towards national development, urban working-class struggles, and above all peasant and anti-colonial movements. This tradition of thought—and a number of the states which originated from this process, notably China, Vietnam, Laos, and Cuba—are still with us today, in the majority world in particular.

As C. Wright Mills' book (1963) neatly captures, this was the dominant global meaning of Marxism in the post-war period, progressively replacing any interest in *independent* working-class action and thought with the concern to *mobilize* working-class activism behind a line that was "overdetermined" by the context of decolonization and Cold War. As the disappointments of the new regimes started to become clear around the world, new forms of Marxism developed—particularly, but not only, in western Europe, where there was some space between the power structures of orthodox Communisms in power and the vicious repression to which all left organizing was exposed in the wider western sphere of influence, from Latin American dictatorships via apartheid South Africa to the Indonesian massacre of 1965. The conditions for the development of thought also involve some degree of physical survival; the torture chamber, the gulag, and the mass grave are key moments of *intellectual* history.

Much dissident Marxism of this period (Jacoby 1981), such as the Frankfurt School figures, reflected these difficult conditions for popular political participation either with cultural and psychological theories explaining its absence (e.g. Marcuse 1964) or with a humanist celebration of individual freedom (e.g. Fromm 1961). However, the radical-democratic uprisings of the long 1968, in Prague as much as in Paris, in Mexico and Northern Ireland as much as in the old metropolitan centers (Mohandesi et al. 2018), and in new waves of radicalism responding to the discontents of independent nation-states in the Global South, gave rise to a new flourishing of Marxist thought on political participation, once again at a greater distance from the black holes of state power.

These "New Left" Marxisms paid particular attention to the self-organization of new actors—students, Blacks, migrant workers, women—and to the articulation of popular consciousness against the stifling cultural conformity of both the McCarthyite and Soviet 1950s. Although this is historically tied up with the conceptualization of multiple "new social movements"—which were not captured by the gravitational pull of state power in the way that workers', peasants', and nationalist ones had become—in some ways it also represented a return to the "real movement of society" of Marx and Engels' nineteenth century, which had also been marked by an incredible diversity of movements and uprisings, combining many issues and actors.

This period also saw a revival of interest in revolutions as a form of popular self-articulation and self-organization, not simply an organizational bid for state power (in this of course reflecting the uprisings of 1968: Piotrowski 2020), and a new scholarly interest in understanding the empirical realities of popular struggles with all their complexities and cultural specificities. Marxists like E. P. Thompson (1963), Christopher Hill (1972) or Raymond Williams (1985) fit in here; while in India the tradition of subaltern studies is one of the most productive attempts to understand the "real movement of society" of which independence was only one dimension (Nilsen and Roy 2015).

Along with these direct connections ran and runs a wide variety of Marxisms and post-Marxisms which are less geared to the empirical analysis of contemporary movements but nonetheless relevant to understanding popular political participation. These include autonomism (Wright 2002; Holloway 2002; Dinerstein 2015), socialist feminism and social reproduction theory (Wainwright 2009; Bhattacharya 2017; Ferguson 2019), cultural studies (Hall and Jefferson 1975), popular education (Freire 1972), neo-Gramscianism (Morton 2007; Bieler and Morton 2018), ecological Marxism (Moore 2015; Moore and Patel 2018), and black Marxism (Robinson 2000; Taylor 2016).

This flourishing of theoretical approaches is testament to the continuing power of Marxist thought in this area—and of course to the continuing creativity and effectiveness of ordinary people's attempts to shape the world they live in.

Overarching Questions in the Marxist Analysis of Political Participation

In all of this we can identify some consistent questions in the Marxist analysis of popular political participation. The first is how workplace relationships, exploitation and oppression, and social inequality restrict participation and the wider struggle of the majority to become and remain subjects in the public world, capable of shaping their own conditions of existence. A second is to explore the development of popular power in different contexts and at many levels—from everyday forms of popular culture and identity via the construction of social movements and institutions such as unions and parties to moments of mass mobilization and revolution.

A third is how this process of struggling for democracy in the state, economy, and culture—together with responses of repression and co-optation from above and the actions of other political actors—leads to the shaping and reshaping of political institutions and political culture. A final question is how the resulting architecture of formal institutions and informal ways of being in turn shapes the possibilities for popular political participation in any given time and place.

From a Marxist point of view, then, the challenge is to not take the institutional specifics of Western Europe and North America between, say, 1945 and 1989 as defining the "politics" within which people "participate" to greater or lesser degrees or towards which specific initiatives or innovations should be targeted. It is rather to see that situation, as others, as a set of truce lines between power from above and multiple struggles from below, truce lines which shape popular struggles to participate in the shaping of one's own life—but which are also challenged and occasionally remade by such struggles (Cox and Nilsen 2014). This becomes evident if we start from a different history.

India, the "world's largest democracy," contains nearly one-fifth of everyone alive and has a larger population than Western Europe and the US/Canada combined. Like most states on the planet, it became independent from European empires within living memory. This postcolonial experience, the much greater political instability common outside of the postwar West, and its current authoritarian turn (again part of a wider phenomenon), make India a useful case to think about political participation in more globally relevant ways. The following brief survey of the trajectories of popular organizing and mobilizing in India from the 1920s to the present show us how important it is to gain distance from Western-centric assumptions about political participation. It also gives us the opportunity to show how Marxist perspectives on political participation work in an extended example.

Struggles for Political Participation in India

Nowhere else in the world do voters go to the polls in such large numbers as in India, and, significantly, India's poor exercise the right to vote more eagerly and in greater proportion than the country's middle classes and elites. However, voting in elections is only one of a great variety of ways that the country's popular classes and subaltern citizens participate in political life. In fact, if we consider how India has developed as a modern nation-state from the late colonial era until the present, the picture that emerges is one in which popular movements have repeatedly contested, negotiated, and changed both significant relations of social power—for example, power relations based on class, caste, and gender—and state–society relations. In doing so, these movements have also changed both the form of political participation, and the terms on which political participation actually takes place—as Marxists have always insisted they do.

Let us consider, first of all, the trajectory of India's freedom movement from 1920 onwards. As with many other anticolonial movements, modern Indian nationalism began as an elite pursuit. The Indian National Congress (Congress) which was formed in 1885 to lobby for reforms in the colonial state apparatus consisted largely of middle-class professionals, and pursued a moderate strategy of advocacy. This began to change with Gandhi's ascendancy as its leader. In Gandhi's view, India's rural masses had to be at the core of the struggle for freedom. Consequently, Congress was reorganized to enable participation from beyond the narrow confines of the urban educated and professional classes. According to Chandra et al. (2000: 14), this strategy made it possible for Congress to position itself at the helm of "a mass movement which mobilized the people to the widest possible extent."

However, the popular classes that made their way into the Congress organization did not simply file in passively behind leaders such as Gandhi and Nehru. On the contrary, they very often interpreted ideas of independence and freedom in ways that were far more radical than what the Congress leadership propagated—and, crucially, they also acted on these interpretations in militant and sometimes violent ways. Consequently, each of the nation-wide mobilizations that took place between the early 1920s and the early 1940s—the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement, and the Quit India Movement—were marked by forms of popular collective action that challenged existing forms of class and caste power more fundamentally than what the Congress leadership was prepared to go along with. In this sense, India's freedom movement was itself an arena for struggle over the forms and terms of political participation. On the one hand, the leaders of Congress wanted what has been referred to as "controlled mass participation" (Sarkar 1983: 180). On the other hand, popular classes often participated in the freedom struggle in order to turn their worlds upside down—for instance, by overthrowing exploitative and oppressive forms of landlordism—by any means necessary, including violence. If we read these dynamics from a Marxist point of view, what emerges is a dual struggle against constraints on political participation—one against the institutionalization of white supremacy in colonial rule and the other against the bourgeois politics of the nationalist leadership.

Ultimately, the Congress leadership succeeded in curbing popular radicalism through a combination of demobilization and coercion. Indeed, as independence was drawing closer and Congress became a government-in-waiting and eventually a movement-become-state, subaltern collective action was increasingly smashed by the coercive force of the state—with the crushing of the Telangana uprising in the early 1950s being a case in point (see Purushotham 2019). Consequently, while the country's popular classes had, in many ways, set a new standard for political participation during the freedom movement, the first twenty years of India's independent nationhood (1947–1967) was marked by a truce line, defined, on the one hand, by the hegemonic position of the Congress in electoral politics, and, on the other hand, by the disintegration of subaltern social movements that ceded their capacity for collective action to "the strong hand of the Nehruvian state" (Ray and Katzenstein 2005: 14). Congress hegemony was based on its ability to secure the support of dominant landowning castes in the countryside, who in turn commanded the vote banks that the Congress relied upon in the electoral arena. The political participation of popular classes, in other words, was circumscribed and controlled—at least for some time (see Frankel 2004). In fact, the workings of Congress hegemony can be understood as a bulwark against the transformative potential of popular struggles for participation from below, which pushed against the confines of bourgeois politics during the nationalist movement.

However, in the late 1960s, this truce line began to unravel. The hegemonic power of Congress was waning, and the eruption of the Naxalite revolt in West Bengal in 1967—a guerrilla insurgency headed by the Communist Party of India, Marxist-Leninist—signaled the end of subaltern acquiescence and the beginning of a decade in which India would witness the rise of new social movements which organized groups that had been excluded, and that mobilized around issues that had been neglected, both by the hegemonic Congress Party and by the parliamentary left parties. Among the most significant movements of the 1970s were the Chipko movement that championed the livelihoods of forest-dwelling communities in Uttarakhand, the Kerala Fishworkers' Forum that organized poor fisherfolk in Kerala against the destruction of their livelihoods by mechanized trawling, and the Shramik Sangathana that mobilized Bhil Adivasis in western India around issues of agricultural wages, land control, and forest rights. The 1970s also witnessed the emergence of a new wave of feminist mobilization in India. In part this mobilization took the form of women articulating gendered concerns within the context of new social movements, but even more significantly it revolved around the emergence of an autonomous women's movement—that is, a movement of women's groups that were independent of social movements and political parties—that politicized issues such as violence against women, religious fundamentalism, and communalism, and women's economic marginalization.

These social movements articulated radical critiques of the exclusionary nature of India's postcolonial democracy as well as visions for a more participatory politics and socially just development, and were a political force to be reckoned with throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Parallel with these developments, Dalits and lower-caste groups organized their own political parties and began to vote independently of the mediation of dominant landowning castes. One of the key pivots of India's new lower-caste movement—a movement that has been referred to as a "silent revolution" (Jaffrelot 2003)—has been the issue of expanded reservations of government jobs and educational opportunities for Dalits and lower-caste groups. One of the signal achievements in this regard was the introduction of job reservations for lower-caste groups (the so-called Other Backward Classes) by the National Front government—a movement-supported government—in 1990.

In this process, Congress hegemony was sundered, and new truce lines were drawn as political institutions and political culture in India were reshaped in many ways. However, as much as the rise of new social movements and the crystallization of new lower-caste movements and parties propelled a deepening of Indian democracy by bringing new groups and issues into the domain of political participation, the decade of the 1990s was ultimately shaped by India's turn to neoliberal economic policies and the rise of Hindu nationalism as a national political force. Several of the social movements that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s entered into phases of abeyance, fragmentation, and stagnation—and some, for example the Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save the Narmada Movement), confronted serious defeats. Some movements—India's feminist movement being a case in point—increasingly turned to the NGO format to sustain their activity, and concentrated on advocacy for legal reforms as a way to achieve progressive social change. Whereas professionalized advocacy has been able to win some such reforms, there is little doubt that NGOization and advocacy have less disruptive power, and therefore also less anti-systemic transformative potential, than the social movements of the 1970s and 1980s.

None of this is to say that the challenge of subaltern collective action has been permanently domesticated in India. On the contrary, Indian popular politics continues to be reinvigorated by new conflicts. The first two decades of the twenty-first century, for example, saw the proliferation of protest against the dispossession of rural communities—India's land wars—as a result of Special Economic Zones and mining. Similarly, the 2010s witnessed the emergence of new and innovative forms of feminist and queer activism that once again began to shift the parameters of political participation in India. And while electoral politics in the country has come to be dominated by the authoritarian populism of Narendra Modi and the right-wing Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party since 2014, those who find themselves at the receiving end of the governing party's blend of religious majoritarianism and neoliberalism are fighting back. The introduction of anti-Muslim citizenship laws in late 2019, for example, was resisted through massive nationwide protests that were only disbanded after the imposition of a national lockdown in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, at the time of writing, Indian farmers are engaged in a militant, long-term protest to roll back market-oriented reforms. Both struggles underline the Marxist theme of the persistent power of popular classes to challenge and change the forms and terms of political participation, even in the face of an authoritarian onslaught.

Conclusion: Popular Political Participation since the Crash

As already noted, Marxism's historical focus means that it *expects* the nature and meaning of popular participation to continue changing. This chapter, therefore, concludes with some considerations on political participation in what might be called late neoliberalism, since the 2007–2008 economic crash. Neoliberalism was already entering its twilight in terms of the ability to satisfy the various members of its alliance before the crash (Cox and Nilsen 2014). Since then, the shift to austerity politics, an accumulation strategy which has only seriously been displaced by the massive state interventions required by Covid-19, meant its declining reliance on prior forms of political participation and a need to construct new forms of right-wing opinion politics and crony capitalism. These inherently unstable combinations were necessarily short term, tied to the increasingly short perspectives of Western capital in particular. This background makes it possible to start considering the nature of popular participation in the 2010s and forward into the post-virus context.

We can start with the Euro-American world, where the presumption of stable forms of political participation once had most purchase. At present this includes some 22.6 percent of the world's population—if we stretch a point and include not just "the West" but post-Soviet East and Central Europe and Latin America, regions which share some political languages and traditions with Western Europe, the US, and Canada, but whose actual history of popular participation is radically different.

In this world, recent decades have seen a crumbling of once-high levels of institutionalized participation in "mainstream" politics, with the Pasokification of the center left and the rise of right-wing opinion politics largely organized through the media, shading into an overtly racist and violent far right. *Popular* participation in politics has struggled to find a new home after the collapse of unions, social democratic parties, and (in countries like France or Italy) mass communist parties. Both electoralist and horizontal strategies to overcome this have reached an impasse, which has appeared like the encounter of an irresistible force with an immovable object: at times very large levels of popular mobilization (electorally or on the streets) failed to significantly shift the structures of neoliberalism, despite (importantly) decisively undermining its popular legitimacy. This was also true for those countries where left-led governments took power, whether in Greece or in the "pink tide" of Brazil, Argentina, or Chile. All of these societies saw large-scale popular involvement on the streets but separated from reformist governments, which were effectively defeated.

The deeper problem of both electoralism and horizontalism of the Occupy or *indignad@s* kind in most cases, however, has been their relatively shallow roots, born of a primacy of the political which has been celebrated in voluntarist ways but failed to engage with the challenge that Barker (1995) discussed of how to throw off the "muck of ages" (the social relationships and cultural forms of capitalist hegemony) or that of articulating Lebowitz' (2003) "political economy of labor." Consistent with this analysis, the most sustained forms of challenge to neoliberalism have not been those which have aimed for quick mobilization and rapid headlines but those which have either been grounded in existing popular institutions—notably Indigenous self-organization in the Andes but also the bringing together of a "movement of movements" in the early 2000s—and those where near-revolutionary conditions have allowed for extensive and rapid forms of popular self-organization, such as the Argentinian uprising of 2001 or the *mareas* of the Spanish 15M movement.

Elsewhere, in the space marked by this "twilight of neoliberalism" (Cox and Nilsen 2014), we have seen a flourishing of (largely unstable) experimentations with violent or authoritarian, far-right or racist governments: Trump and Brexit, Bolsonaro and Orbán, France and Poland. The question of popular participation remains a crucial problem in these regions, rather than something which has been adequately resolved. The strengths of a Marxist analysis in this context include its refusal to develop a grand theory of the new shape of world politics on the basis, for example, of a highly-visible but local and fragile experiment like Trump—and its insistence rather on historicizing the problem. In this view, the current crisis is marked by a crisis of hegemony, producing a search from above for new forms of popular consent for neoliberalism within the core—but also by the declining capacity of popular movements to articulate themselves effectively in institutional ways.

By contrast, popular politics in most of Asia and Africa (76.8% of our species) has *never* worked as traditional models implied: not under colonialism, not in the independence struggles of the mid-twentieth century, and not subsequently. In fact, what is most visible is the *different* trajectories taken in each of these periods, as movements became states, successfully channeling some popular movements and keeping others to the margins—and then, under neoliberalism, increasingly marginalizing once core peasant or working-class supporters. We have already discussed the numerically crucial Indian case, paralleled perhaps by Turkey: in both countries long-standing and well-organized forms of right-wing religious politics have come to power that can only be sustained by a constant search for enemies and (despite their mass base) continuous erosion of even the appearance of democracy. By contrast, the Chinese state—one of the few survivors of the collapse of the "second world" in 1989–1990 thanks to successful repression—remains extraordinarily powerful, able to survive multiple peripheral conflicts (Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, India) and to keep the constant bubbling-up of labor and rural unrest fragmented and local. Myanmar—where the 2021 coup is ongoing as we write—raises the question of how long this strategy is viable in any weaker state.

In South Africa, a different scenario again plays out. Despite claims for a "revolt of the poors," most community protest remains loyal to (while making contentious claims on) the ANC. As in India or Ireland in the post-independence decades, political participation largely takes place within and around the structures of a movement-become-state. The marginalization of the radical shack-dwellers of Abahlali baseMjondolo, the dissident labor energies that were gunned down in Marikana, and the remarkable moment of Rhodes Must Fall all mark possible alternatives that are as yet too weak to threaten continuing ANC hegemony, not least within the pandemic: lockdown measures massively impacted informal livelihoods in townships and shantytowns, with unemployment reaching 34 percent.

Part of what this whistlestop tour suggests is the continuing problem of the nation-state as the space in which popular hopes have historically been vested—whether in the once national-developmentalist South, the post-Soviet context, or western post-Fordist states. Neoliberalism is increasingly incapable of mobilizing participation behind anything other than far-right banners of various kinds; center-left electoralisms can neither change the structure nor find effective avenues for mass participation; and the scope for articulating "movement of movements" alternatives seems to have declined since the turn of the century.

Put another way, if Hardt and Negri (2000) were wrong to argue that the nation-state had ceased to be the central location of politics, nonetheless its declining economic and cultural power, and its declining relevance for organizing popular participation, constitutes what Gramsci (1971) would identify as an organic rather than simply conjunctural crisis. The impasse just sketched—where "radical reformist" electoralisms cannot transform neoliberalism, and horizontal mobilizations cannot overthrow it—forces us to think about the limits of conventional forms of political participation.

In this particular context, two sets of experiences seem particularly significant. On the world-historical stage, the Zapatista revolution in Chiapas and the women's revolution in Rojava have punched massively above the weight of the small, poor, and historically oppressed populations involved, particularly given the forces arrayed against them—a fact clearly tied to their capacity to engage a sustained level of popular mobilization absent from most struggles around the world, but reminiscent of earlier decades of revolutionary upheaval. Their rejection of the goal of independent statehood, rooting in multi-ethnic populations, and centering of a dramatic change in gender relations in the everyday lives of the poor are surely a key part of this story, and have to be seen as telling us something significant about the nature of power in the twenty-first century.

So too with Indigenous movements around the world, which again punch well above their weight in opposing fossil fuel and other forms of extractivism and accumulation by dispossession. Again, their non-state nature—along with the centrality of defending a way of life partly anchored outside the sphere of capitalist production rather than simply negotiating distributional issues within that sphere—seems important in understanding their effectiveness.

To say this is not to celebrate these or to condemn other experiences: it is in any case unlikely that many readers of these pages will be in any position to emulate them. Rather, what Marxist analysis encourages us to do is to pay close attention to them precisely as *changing* forms of popular participation—at the same time as paying attention to the *declining* effectiveness of other such forms.

More generally, in a world of reviving authoritarianisms, postcolonial and post socialist states, right-wing populisms and contested international forms of governance, Marxist analyses encourage us to move away from idealizing a golden age or perfect ideal of democracy and instead encourage us to ask how particular, historically specific forms enable or constrain popular political subjectivity and the exercise of popular power—and how the ebb and flow of social movements, new authoritarianisms, and corporate governance in turn shape those forms.

The basic question remains, as it was for Marx and Engels, to identify the changing ways in which the poor, the powerless, and those at the bottom of hierarchies of race, gender, and so on attempt to gain some control over the social conditions that shape their lives; how the wealthy, powerful, and privileged attempt to repress, channel, or co-opt these struggles, and how this process is shaping not just the forms of the twenty-first century state but those of power more generally.

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CHAPTER 13

BRIDGING RATIONALIST, STRUCTURALIST, AND CULTURALIST APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

MARC HOOGHE

Almost by definition, political participation is a phenomenon with a multitude of different characteristics and elements. Not only are we interested in who performs the participation act, we also wish to investigate the kind of message participants want to communicate, the actors and institutions that are addressed by that message, and finally, it is important to know what kind of effect participation acts might have. Conceptualizing political participation as a communication act from citizens to the political system implies that participating can be investigated both at the individual level (thus focusing on the participant), and on a more macro-level (focusing on the social structure or on the interaction with the political system). From a disciplinary perspective, this means that participation studies can be found not only in political science, but just as well in sociology, psychology, and other disciplines. The fact that there are multiple dimensions also implies that scholars using different theoretical perspectives will be inclined to focus on different dimensions of the participation process. Given rapid transformations in organizational and communication styles, and the changing geographic scale of participation campaigns, it is likely that this process of academic fragmentation will even become stronger in the years and decades ahead (Van Deth 2014), and it can be questioned to what extent this development still helps us to develop participation studies that actually lead to new insights. In line with the previous chapters in this volume, we can distinguish mainly rationalist (emphasizing the rational motivation of participants), structuralist (focusing on social structure as a determinant), and culturalist (investigating the role of cultural norms in mobilization) as main theoretical streams in this line of research.

Selecting a specific theoretical framework, to a large extent also implies specific empirical choices. If the focus is on the question what motivates actors to participate in the first place, both social–psychological and rationalist approaches are routinely used. For participants, it indeed makes sense to ask the question whether their efforts will contribute to a desired outcome, and when this is not the case, they are more likely to abstain (Oegema and Klandermans 1994). If the focus is on the broader social and political effects of participation acts, these rationalist approaches are not able to offer us much guidance: a typical feature of the activity of both political parties and social movements is that it is highly uncertain what the outcome of a mobilization campaign will be, and more likely than not, mobilization campaigns often do fail. Pursuing social change rarely is a "rational" act, when one uses a narrow definition of rationality. That implies that structuralist and culturalist approaches are more often used for this specific research angle. This approach leads to a research focus either on the structural conditions within society or the political system with regard to forms of political participation, or to an emphasis on the way participation acts interact with and challenge prevailing cultural codes. To a large extent, it can be noted that these different research perspectives each have led to a thriving research agenda, with as a result an abundant literature, both on individual participation behavior and on the functioning of social movement organizations and political parties (Leighley 1995). By itself, there is nothing inappropriate about the fact that these research lines exist rather independently from one another, and often even tend to ignore each other's existence. If the research interest is to understand the effect of participation, it is indeed not all that useful to have to develop first a full theory on the motivation of individual participants. However, simultaneously there is a clear danger that each of these approaches tends to isolate in an artificial manner just one specific element of the full process of political participation, thus rendering it impossible to arrive at a more general understanding of the phenomenon in democratic societies (Lichbach and Zuckerman 2009). It is rather striking to note that there is a much richer theoretical debate with regard to non-electoral forms of political participation than to electoral participation. Partly this is a result of the different nature of these participation forms. While for example, protest behavior implies some form of organization (thus leading to various theoretical questions on the meso-level), voting is almost by definition an act that is performed by an individual, without any form of organization. In most circumstances, therefore, meso-questions will not be relevant for someone who investigates voting behavior. The question to what extent voters pursue in a rational manner their own (material) interests, or whether they are being led by cultural norms, however, has been hotly debated in the literature (Weakliem and Heath 1994; Fitzgerald 2018; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000). What does seem clear, however, is that most voters actually spend quite some cognitive effort to ascertain in what way a specific party choice might contribute to their own preferences (Lau and Redlawsk 2006; Stiers 2021). The idea that voters can be rather easily manipulated, therefore, does not seem to be supported by this line of empirical research. As there is a much more developed theoretical debate about the nature and the determinants of non-electoral participation, than is the case for voting, however, in this chapter we will focus mostly on the debate with regard to non-electoral participation.

Like for any other form of human behavior, scholars of political participation start from different, and sometimes conflicting, assumptions about human motivation and behavior (Lichbach and Zuckerman 2009). In other disciplines too, there is an ongoing discussion on whether actors should be seen first of all as profit-maximizing individuals, or whether they have a tendency to be guided by cultural norms and emotional decision-making. While some of these worldviews are inherently incompatible, at least from some perspectives, bridging the theoretical divide in the study of political participation should lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of political participation. As the previous chapters in this volume have made clear, at least three different lines of research can be distinguished in this regard. Some authors start from the assumption that actors are mainly goal-oriented, and within that perspective, they will be likely to take part in political participation acts only when there is a reasonable expectation that this will lead to specific policy effects, or even to individual benefits (Uhlaner 1986). This approach can be used both for very basic participation acts that do not require all that much effort, like voting, all the way to very demanding or risky behavior within protest movements. Structural approaches tend to view political participation as a result of structural positions and cleavages within society, with an emphasis on class conflict and gender divisions (Nie, Powell, and Prewitt 1969; Touraine 1978). Finally, various studies have invoked a cultural dimension, both to explain the motivation of activists, as well as the consequences of their collective action on the cultural codes governing society (Melucci 1996). Most of the studies on political participation and social movements can clearly be situated within one of these three research lines. These distinct research traditions, however, also lead to a situation where scholars only work within one established research line. In some cases, relations are even clearly antagonistic, as scholars aiming at a cultural understanding of political participation and protest behavior, will reject some of the guiding assumptions of rationalist approaches. From a narrowly defined rationalist perspective, indeed, it often does not make sense to try to pursue social change (Fehr and Gintis 2007). In reviewing the literature, it is obvious that there are very few studies that try to connect these different perspectives, let alone that achieve this goal. In this chapter we focus on both the limits and the opportunities of these kinds of attempts at combining different theoretical paradigms. Our goal is not to argue for an overall combination of all these approaches, but rather to highlight in what specific circumstances bridging various insights and research traditions might lead to a more comprehensive understanding of participation. We close by offering a preliminary model that could guide future efforts to bridge the theoretical divide in investigating political participation.

The goal of the current chapter is not to offer a summary of the previous chapters, where the various theoretical approaches that have shaped the study of political participation have been extensively presented. Rather, our goal is to investigate to what extent there is an added value in combining some of these approaches, depending on the specific research question one wishes to pursue. The underlying assumption is that in specific cases, it does make sense to try to employ different theoretical frameworks in order to investigate specific aspects of the participation process, especially in the current era where mobilization campaigns no longer are restricted by the more traditional formats that were used in the past. For other topics, however, we can just accept that these are totally independent research paradigms, that are to a large extent self-sufficient, so we do not gain all that much from any effort to try to bridge these various perspectives.

What Motivates Participants?

A crucial research question with regard to political participation deals with the motivation of participants. Especially in high-risk or high-cost circumstances it remains something of a puzzle why individuals are willing to endure these costs, even when they know or should know that the odds of achieving their goals are against them. Solving the puzzle of motivation, therefore, is a crucial challenge, not just for participation research, but also for all mobilizing agents (Klandermans 1997). Solving the puzzle of participation, indirectly, also allows us to answer the question as to why some people do not participate, even in those circumstances where one could argue that objectively all conditions are present to encourage or facilitate political participation. Different approaches, however, have taken rather conflicting perspectives on how to investigate this kind of motivation. Rationalist approaches basically assume not only that actors are aware of what can be considered as their legitimate interests, but that they also act upon these perceptions. It can be questioned, however, to what extent actors indeed know what their interests are, and in most cases there will not even be any consensus about these preferred goals. A classic example could be that even among low-income groups, there is not a consensus on efforts at redistribution, even when it could be argued that all members of that group would strongly benefit from such a policy (Piven and Cloward 1977). A rather obvious counterargument toward rationalist approaches could be that if the level of rational instrumentalism of participants really was as elevated as is assumed, participants should be more successful in actually reaching their goals. The fact that often they do not experience this kind of success suggests that at least to some extent, they apparently are not all that successful in identifying the ideal circumstances for their endeavor. If participation were indeed the result of a pure instrumental reasoning, the most likely outcome would be that there would hardly be any participation at all.

A necessary qualification therefore, is that one should envision a more bounded form of rationality, where actors only try to achieve their goals within the limits of the framework being set by their institutional and cultural environment (Simon 1995). As these limits and institutional constraints tend to be rather stable over time, "rational" actors indeed would be inclined to consider them as given, and to take into account these limitations in deciding their course of action. Such an approach can be promising in some circumstances: even when participants have a predominantly instrumental motivation to achieve specific goals, it can be assumed that they will take into account the limitations of what is perceived to be possible within a given social and cultural context. Within the conditions of bounded rationality, few people will feel inclined to participate in order to achieve a goal that seems completely out of reach, as this act is not just frustrating by itself but can also be considered as a waste of scarce individual resources. This implies that radical participation acts in general tend to be a rare phenomenon, and do not receive all that much support among the general population. The notion of bounded rationality, therefore, allows us an interesting perspective in our effort to explore the possibility of bridges between the various dominant perspectives. It does mean that potential participants will try to judge the likelihood of any form of success, given specific political and cultural circumstances.

Simultaneously, however, it should be acknowledged that in other circumstances, the conflict between both theoretical perspectives simply cannot be solved and that any attempt to do so, will be futile. The prevailing culture within a society actively legitimizes forms of inequality and exclusion, and an obvious goal of this culture is exactly to prevent excluded groups from gaining a mobilizing sense of group consciousness, and to the extent that this culture is interiorized, it will prevent marginalized groups from pursuing their own interests (Miller et al. 1981). What might seem to be rational behavior from a micro-perspective, therefore, will in practice help to continue and to strengthen a societal status-quo. Scholars, self-evidently, tend to focus on participation acts, as that means there is something to observe. One should remember however, that a vast majority of citizens routinely opts for non-participation, which tends to be a neglected field of research (Amnå and Ekman 2014). Therefore, it does remain important to keep a clear distinction between the specific level one wishes to investigate and the research question one wishes to address in empirical research.

This kind of theoretical incommensurability can be seen as even more of a challenge when the professed goal of participants or a social movement organization is to challenge these cultural norms in the first place, as this implies a much more fundamental form of social change than just pursuing short-term material interests within a given framework of political negotiations. Given the fact that cultural norms within a society are not just pervasive, but also tend to be rather stable across time, participants cannot assume that taking part in an effort to change those cultural codes, at least in the short run, will further their own material interests. Social movements that mainly aim to pursue cultural change, therefore, cannot reasonably expect that they will achieve their goals in the short run, let alone that individual participants would be able to benefit from these achievements (Eyerman and Jamison 1995). Nevertheless, it is obvious that these kinds of social movements do exist, and they are associated with some of the most profound changes in contemporary society, for example with regard to changes in gender roles, the fighting of prejudice, or acknowledging forms of sexual diversity. Although one should not expect strong causal relations in this regard, it is clear that profound changes in social values have been accompanied by social movement organizations that have been quite successful in raising social awareness on these issues.

By equating rationalism with a narrow definition of instrumentality, the rationalist approaches not only delegitimize this kind of social movement activity, but might also be used to actively discourage potential participants from engaging in this kind of "non-rational" activity. Using such a narrow definition of rationality disregards the role altruism does play in explaining activism that does not benefit the participant (Giugni and Grasso 2019). However, especially for cultural transformation movements, it does remain an important challenge to provide their members with any selective benefits that could be able to motivate them to invest scarce resources like time and money, for this collective good. When the purpose of a social movement is to strengthen cultural awareness, this should be considered as a pure collective good, and it is impossible to exclude anyone from taking advantage of these cultural changes. For members of a minority group, therefore, it does not make sense to contribute to any mobilization in order to achieve this kind of cultural change, because they are likely to benefit from the potential effects of the mobilization, whether or not they take part in the mobilization efforts. Participation, however, should not be reduced to merely instrumental motivations, as to some extent expressive and identity motivations will be equally important (Fieldhouse 2019). This leads to a highly relevant research question: What is the motivation of participants in long-term struggles that are aimed at contributing toward cultural change? A promising perspective for this line of research might be based on the insights that social movements should not be reduced to just one specific kind of goal: even when the long-term goal is to bring about social change (thus leading to a free-rider problem), this will still be combined with short-term tangible gains that provide a real benefit for the participants. An example could be the gay liberation movement that started in the 1960s (D'Emilio 1983). To a large extent, it could be argued that this gay and lesbian movement was aimed at achieving cultural change, and in retrospect it can indeed be observed that norms on the social acceptance of homosexuality have changed in a profound manner during the past century in most liberal societies. Simultaneously, however, the movement also emphasized rather short-term goals, like the recognition of same-sex relations, or the possibility to build a local subculture, with cultural institutions. The social function of the activities of these organizations, can also be seen as a motivating factor for individual participation. These kinds of achievements can be seen as just a small stepping-stone toward the much broader goal of contributing to cultural change, but simultaneously they do provide benefits to individual members, thus motivating them to invest in the goals of the broader movement.

With these examples, it can be demonstrated that the notion of "bounded rationality" can help us to combine different theoretical approaches to the study of political participation, even in cases where this is not self-evident. Within the limits of cultural and political codes, mobilizing agents still have a vested interest in making sure that there is a clear incentive for potential participants, even when these incentives seem to be situated quite far in the future. Simultaneously, however, it needs to be acknowledged that these approaches do part from a totally different vision of human behavior and motivation. In the rationalist perspective, human being should be considered first of all as creatures that seek to maximize their access to scarce resources in an economically rational manner, but for scholars working in more culturalist traditions, this view of human motivation is totally unacceptable, which implies there is often no common ground possible. As such, the recommendation would be that while it is important to apply a multiple-perspective approach to political participation, it does not seem a productive strategy to try to combine incommensurable perspectives under all circumstances.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Another consideration is that these different approaches also investigate the phenomenon of political participation on different levels. For rationalist approaches, there is a clear focus on the individual or micro-level, as the theoretical interest is first of all an individual decision to participate or not. The individual is seen as sufficiently autonomous, and sufficiently able to discern what her/his interests are. Influence from other actors, or from the mobilization contexts that the individual is enrolled in, are to a large extent even considered as a disrupting element, as they might provide information, or even peer pressure to obscure the interests of the individual in question. Cultural and structural perspectives opt for the exact opposite approach, by emphasizing the macro-level determinants of political participation. It is the social structure that largely determines the odds that specific groups of the population will try to mobilize to get their voices heard, whether these macro-determinants are mostly economic, or whether they relate to societal cultural norms. As is well known in the field of the social sciences more broadly, it is extremely difficult to reconcile micro- and macro-level approaches to the study of the same phenomenon. In most circumstances, this will require bringing in a meso-level approach, by focusing on mobilizing structures. While traditionally this implied a focus on social movements' organizations and networks, in the more recent literature there is much more attention for the way various communication tools and techniques have supplemented this more traditional form of organization and mobilization. To some extent, this even allows for a more integrated view on both non-electoral and electoral participation forms: in the field of electoral politics, too, political parties have abandoned most of their traditional structure and mobilization instruments, and engage in internet-based forms of mobilization, in exactly the same manner as social movement organizations tend to do (Gibson and Cantijoch 2013). The meso-level thus plays a crucial role in any worthwhile effort to explain the occurrence, or the effects of political participation (Minkoff and McCarthy 2005). Social movement organizations (or for that matter, any other form of mobilizing institution) indeed are the crucial connection between all the various dimensions of political participation. Self-evidently, they need to be clear about what kind of policy goal they wish to pursue, and we can only assume this will be their primary reason for existence in the first place. But the subsequent challenge is to convince potential participants about the merits of the envisioned action, as otherwise the organization simply will not be able to pursue its goals. This meso-level of the organization, therefore, offers a promising research angle as it allows us to combine insights from various research traditions, a combination that is less straightforward if one wishes to focus on either the micro or the macro level.

Combining Insights

Two combinations of theoretical perspectives seem to be most promising for the study of political participation. First, rationalist and structuralist perspectives obviously can and should be combined. While the first approach emphasizes the motivation on an individual level, structuralist theories can help us to explain why, from a macro-level, specific groups within society have a reason to defend their own interests by means of various forms of political participation. The definition of self-interest indeed is largely dependent on one's position within society, both with regard to class structure, as with regard to other forms of stratification. A pattern of social stratification, therefore, is necessary before it becomes meaningful to even consider specific group interests. Basically, this refers to the traditional question about class consciousness: actors first need to be aware of the specific social class they belong to, before they can act upon the interests of their specific group. Simultaneously, it could be expected that the high-status groups within society will try to legitimize their dominant position by emphasizing the cultural values that are supportive of the societal status quo. When social movements want to defend the interests of low economic status groups, a specific disadvantage for these groups is that they will only have a restricted access to the material resources that are necessary for successful mobilization in the first place. Classic approaches like the resource mobilization theory also should take into account that, within societies, these available resources will be spread quite unevenly. These structural economic conditions not only determine whether they are likely to protest, but to some extent also help us to explain the specific form of participation that is preferred. Comparative studies of social stratification patterns, furthermore, can help us to explain national differences in the occurrence of social movements and participation repertoires. The concept of relative deprivation suggests that rather than the absolute level of deprivation, it is rather the extent to which this deprivation is experienced by the groups concerned that is relevant in this regard. A highly relevant approach in this respect focuses on the "political opportunity structure" that social movements are confronted with (Kriesi 2004; Meyer and Minkoff 2004). While some political systems provide ample opportunities for oppositional movements to express their discontent and to gain political influence, this will be not be the case in other, more closed or authoritarian political systems. The apparent puzzle, however, is that in both kind of systems protest movements do occur, although with different success and opting for different participation repertoires. The main insight to be gained from the literature on political opportunity structures is that movements will continue to engage in protest activity, but that the specific action repertoire that they will use, will be largely determined by the opportunities being given by the political system. While in countries with a more open political culture, it is more likely that challengers will participate in policy networks, a closed political system often leads to polarization and a more confrontational participation repertoire. This opportunity structure not only has an effect on the question whether mobilization will occur in the first place, but also what kind of format the participation will take, and it also has a strong effect on the likelihood of success (Grasso and Giugni 2016). Although the underlying view on human motivation is not often explicitly mentioned in the literature on the concept of political opportunity structure, the mere notion of this concept suggests the expectation that challengers will react in a rather rational manner to the opportunities being offered by the political system.

A second, equally promising combination is based on structural and cultural theoretical models. It is only when specific stratification patterns in society are present that groups can develop an understanding of social and cultural change. Relative deprivation theories typically have assumed that protest does not arise at the moment of the highest level of deprivation, but only when there is a gradual improvement of social conditions, giving rise to higher aspiration that are subsequently being frustrated. Although in contemporary social science it has become unfashionable to assume a strong relation between structural positions and ideological preferences, it does remain important to point out that movements for cultural change can only develop within specific circumstances. Studies on, for example, the women's and the environmental movement do point out that the cultural change brought about by these movements only became possible within a specific economic context. Classic studies on the civil rights movement, for example, suggest that this movement did not emerge at the moment that the living conditions were at their worst, but rather at a moment when culturally liberating norms rendered it possible to question the social status quo (McAdam 1982). The example suggests that it is not sufficient to consider structural patterns of stratification, but that it is equally important to take into account the potentially liberating norms that are present in the political system itself.

While in this chapter we reviewed some of the research literature that is based on a combination of different theoretical perspectives, we also wish to close with a word of caution about the broader social consequences of political participation. Participation campaigns based on considerations of self-interest inevitably imply that the privileged groups within society will have more resources at their disposal that they can use to strengthen their position. Research indeed shows, not only that political participation patterns are highly stratified, but also that the privileged groups within society seem to be more effective in using their participation repertoires to influence processes of political decision-making (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Cultural perspectives, on the other hand, should take into account that processes of cultural hegemony within society will serve to legitimize the current status-quo, rendering it more difficult for the most marginalized groups within society to have their voice heard. There is indeed quite some evidence that this form of stratification has become more powerful in recent decades (Armingeon and Schädel 2015). Groups with a low social status are more strongly dependent on mobilizing organizations in order to gain access to the process of political decision-making. In most countries, however, these kinds of organizations have systematically lost members, and the structural decline of union membership and the decline of labor-oriented political parties, are the most notable example in this regard. This, however, renders low-status groups even more vulnerable, as they no longer have the structural means to overcome their individual lack of political power. The culture of individualization, stressing the salience of individual choices and individual autonomy, to a large extent prevents actors from seeking a common goal, and building a stronger sense of group identity. As such, a strict and one-sided focus on obtaining merely individual benefits could be seen as a major threat to the democratic potential of social movement organizations (Dalton 2017).

Toward an Integrated Model

We have already argued that it is not a desirable goal to try to combine all kinds of various theoretical approaches to construct a general framework for the investigation of political participation. In the worst case, this would only lead to a long (and often contradictory) checklist of items that need to be investigated in a comprehensive study of political participation, and this does not seem to be a promising research strategy. So, by itself there is nothing wrong with the fact that scholars of participation work on isolated topics, each one employing a distinct theoretical perspective, and often not even communicating with one another. That is also a consequence of the degree of academic specialization that one should also expect within the scholarship on political participation. This lack of communication is even further enhanced by the fact that while individual-level studies of political participation tend to rely on ever more sophisticated statistical methods, this trend is hardly visible in other approaches to the study of political participation.

However, investigating political participation inherently starts from a vision of how democracy should or could function in current society (Tarrow 2011). Within the framework of an authoritarian regime, the notion of political participation does not have any meaning, and it hardly merits any academic attention. If under these conditions there is a form of political participation, most often it is organized and serves to support and legitimize the regime. It is only within a fully democratic society that political participation can become a meaningful act, as it offers citizens a way to express their preferences on society and the policy being pursued. Given this inherent democratic interest in political participation, scholars should be interested, not just in the motivation of individual participants, but also in the effects their participation efforts actually have. To a large extent, political participation can be seen as an act of belief in the democratic potential of participation: if the expressed opinion of citizens does not make a difference in real life, there is no real reason to investigate political participation in the first place. Given this normative perspective, I would argue that participation scholars have a vested interest in considering the entire cycle of political participation, or at least to consider this as their broader research agenda. This could even be argued by using a counter question: if one is merely interested in investigating the individual motivation to participate, would it be a good strategy simply to ignore the question on whether participation acts have an effect at all? As the various dimensions of political participation inherently are linked to one another, it is possible to propose a model, bringing together various perspectives of political participation.

The guiding idea in developing such a model is that, first of all, we are interested in the outcomes of political participation acts. The main reason to be interested in political participation is that we assume it has some consequences for the democratic governance of society (Alford and Friedland 1975). It is equally important to take into account the cultural and social meaning of social movement activity. The effect of any form of political participation, therefore, would seem to be the most straightforward element of investigation, or the most promising dependent variable in a comprehensive model. These effects could take various forms, ranging from selecting political officials, to clear policy decisions, to cultural and social change, or even to raising awareness about a specific problem in society (Mansbridge and Morris 2001). In this regard, political participation can be seen as an essential tool for the promotion of social and political change. It is important therefore, to see the success of political participation, not just in narrowly defined political institutional terms, but also to include the effect this kind of participation might have on cultural norms and social awareness (Figure 13.1).

The various theoretical approaches that have been summarized in the previous chapters, do provide us with sufficient information to explain the likelihood of this kind of "success" for political participation efforts. On an individual level, self-evidently, organizers are confronted with the challenge of mobilization: participants should receive sufficient incentives to convince them that it is meaningful to spend their time or other resources on taking part in the campaign or the participation act. When distant goals of cultural change would not seem to be sufficiently mobilizing, these should be implemented with more tangible short-term goals that would be more easily within reach. The statement that individual citizens need to take this kind of decision, does not necessarily imply that one should strictly adhere to a rationalist approach in explaining the motivation of participants. These incentives can also take other forms, like the recognition in face-to-face networks, or the way information is being distributed within these networks. This incentive structure clearly changes over time: in older studies it was emphasized that pre-existing networks and local organizations offered an important mobilization instrument for social movement organizations (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). In contemporary studies, on the other hand, it is often emphasized that internet-based forms of communication will serve an equally strong mobilization effect (Oser and Boulliane 2020). Few studies, however, have thus far

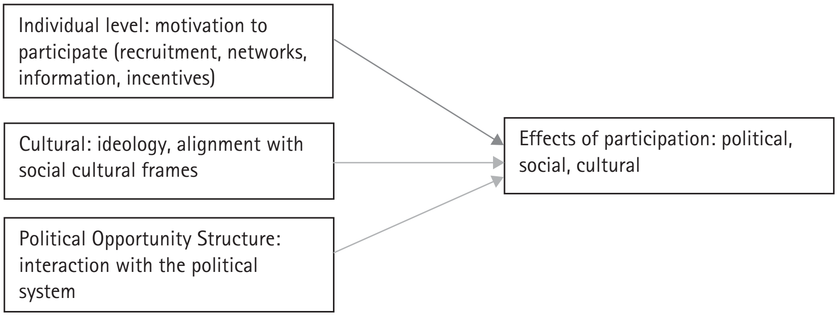
Individual level: motivation to participate (recruitment, networks, information, incentives)
Cultural: ideology, alignment with social cultural frames
Political Opportunity Structure: interaction with the political system
Effects of participation: political, social, cultural

FIGURE 13.1 A Comprehensive Approach to Study Political Participation

investigated to what extent this kind of electronically mediated mobilization network can sustain mobilization in the long run, as the typical time horizon of this kind of campaign tends to be rather limited, and there is a lack of organizational infrastructure that would allow to perpetuate the existence of the movement even in times of low mobilization. Without entering into the debate about the merits of this kind of internet-based communication, it could be observed that in both cases the same essential mobilization functions can be present: potential participants are recruited, they receive information about the goals and the strategy of the movement, and they are able to estimate to what extent others will also participate in the campaign. What we do know, however, is that for specific groups of the population, the internet seems to be a very appealing form of mobilization, and even more appealing than more traditional mobilization networks (Tolbert and McNeal 2003; Oser, Hooghe, and Marien 2013). Taking into account the important role of internet-based communication for younger age cohorts especially, it is to be expected that this role will continue to become more important in the decades ahead.

Second, the main defining characteristic is that participants want to have an effect on politics and society as otherwise there is no point in participating in the first place. The ideology of the party or social movement organization, therefore, has to be perceived as sufficiently attractive and mobilizing by potential participants. To phrase it differently: there has to be a kind of alignment between the ideological preferences of the potential participant and the cultural frame in which the mobilizing agent operates (Snow et al. 2014). The challenge for social movement organizations, therefore, is to develop an ideological framework that is not just compatible with the aspirations of prospective participants, but that also seems to be conducive to reaching the goals of the movement. If such an alignment cannot be made, the movement will be seen as irrelevant or obsolete, and it is less likely to attract a sufficiently high number of participants. The broader cultural setting of a society largely determines what kind of ideological framework will be most conducive for mobilization in a specific society and era. For organizations, spillover effects are important in this regard, as trends with regard to one specific group might also have a mobilizing effect on other groups with a similar preference. Especially with regard to the movements that gained appeal in the 1960s (civil rights, women's movement, environment, gay movement, . . .) it has often been suggested they share a common broader ideology, thus encouraging their joint development and success. On a cross-national level too, it can be observed that the success of a movement in a specific setting often has a spillover effect to other geographical settings.

As a third, important, element we should take into account the structural conditions being offered by the political opportunity structure in which a social movement organization operates. The political system to a large extent will decide in what conditions a movement can develop, and whether it will receive access to political decision makers (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). The interaction with the political system will also shape the participation repertoire: if a political system facilitates the occurrence of social movement organizations, it is much more likely that these organizations will become embedded within a policy network, leading to a more compromise-oriented participation repertoire.

An advantage of the proposed framework is that it does make clear what specific domain is being investigated by scholars of political participation, while it also emphasizes the fact that participation is meaningful first of all for its democratic potential, as we want to know to what extent participation contributes to political, social, or cultural change. Returning to our theoretical starting point, this framework does not necessarily impose any specific ideological perspective for the study of political participation acts. It would seem a rather straightforward approach, however, to use rationalist perspectives mainly to investigate why individuals make a decision to participate or to abstain. Cultural approaches, almost self-evidently, seem most appropriate to identify the ideological meaning of protest activity and political participation. Finally, a structural analysis would be leading to a better understanding of the political opportunity structure of a society, that to a large extent determines not only the specific activity of a social movement organization, but also the likelihood that it will achieve success.

This broad framework might be overly ambitious, as it will not be possible to cover all the ground that is included in the framework in a single study. This way of presenting the various elements of political participation acts and campaigns, however, could make clear that indeed various theoretical perspectives can be meaningfully combined within one broader research project. The current lack of communication between the various theoretical perspectives presented in the previous chapters often leads to a rather fragmented approach that prevents participation research to develop further. The opening up of at least a more intensive communication pattern between the various theoretical perspectives would seem a good first step to overcoming this pattern of fragmentation. When reviewing the participation literature, it is clear that this is a rapidly evolving field of the literature, with a focus on new participation forms, different sets of organizations, changing communication flows, and a changing geographical scale in a globalizing world. This would imply that it becomes even more important than before to also have a focus on the fundamental theoretical elements of the participation process as such. If there is anything we can learn from the way participation studies have developed over the past decades, one could state that holding on to narrowly defined theoretical frameworks, without any communication with authors working within a different theoretical framework, does not seem to be the most productive way to move ahead. In quite some cases, it prevents authors from developing insights in a cumulative manner. In some other cases, unfortunately, it has led to a situation where some of the seminal authors are just repeated again and again, without apparently any wish for further theoretical innovation. It would be a mistake to continue this segregated approach in the years ahead, as it has become more counter-productive to understand political participation in the current era, than it has ever been before. Political participation, and the mobilization leading to participation acts, have become much more of a moving target than ever before in the field of participation studies (Hooghe 2014). Any effort to try to investigate such a moving target seems doomed from the start if a researcher is restricted to using only one, and often quite outdated, theoretical framework.

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PART III

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

CHAPTER 14

SURVEY DATA AND METHODS FOR THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

EVA ANDUIZA AND RAÜL TORMOS

Survey-based methods are a main source for research in the field of political participation. When designing or using already existing survey instruments, researchers face a number of decisions. The accumulated knowledge in survey methodology indicates that few of those decisions are neutral. They are likely to have an important impact on the quality of the estimates, both in terms of our ability to describe (the validity and reliability of our estimators based on different measurement instruments), and to generalize (to make inferences from specific survey research designs). This chapter presents current debates on survey instruments for the analysis of political participation. It reviews the challenges and trade-offs researchers have to face, and locates significant theoretical and methodological contributions in the field in terms of their use of survey methods. The chapter is organized in two main sections dealing with measurement issues and research designs respectively, and closes with some reflections on the challenges of future research.

Conceptualization and Measurement

Measuring political participation in surveys is a challenging quest. In this section we deal with three main concerns: the challenge of defining and measuring a changing reality, sources of biases, and comparability. Besides the conceptual controversies that still exist in the field, a major challenge is capturing the incessant flow of new realities, such as participation occurring through digital and social media platforms and novel behavioral patterns championed by younger generations. The usual survey measures of political participation in national and international projects may have a conservative bias towards validated concepts and indicators, experiencing difficulties at capturing the fluidity of these new realities.

Aside from validity problems, other errors have been identified involving the actual measurement of participation in surveys. A main concern is the overestimation of participation due to biases such as social desirability or memory failures. Electoral turnout has received most of the attention, and only more recently other participatory forms such as protest acts have started to be considered. We discuss some practical approaches to deal with these sources of error.

A final aspect related to the survey measurement of political participation refers to comparability. Adequate instruments should allow measuring the latent concept of political participation in its different modes and levels of intensity. It would then be possible to test the measurement equivalence of such construct across countries and over time. There is a clear shortage of studies attempting this endeavor in the political participation literature, but some important contributions are reviewed.

Conceptual Debates and Changing Participatory Realities

The definition and measurement of political participation has been debated over at least five decades, as pointed out by Theocharis (2015). Two related challenges complicate the possibility of achieving a conclusive solution. On the one hand, the repertoire of political participation is constantly growing, with emerging new forms difficult to identify and classify. On the other hand, ambiguities and discrepancies in the conceptualization of participation need to be overcome to adequately delimitate and categorize this expanding repertoire of potential participatory activities. The usual survey measures in major national and international surveys tend to be ill-equipped to effectively capture these new realities.

There is discussion regarding whether some requirements about what to consider as political participation should be relaxed. Scholars like Van Deth (2014) are in favor of keeping those constraints to avoid stretching the concept too much and arrive at a "concept of everything." Although some perspectives, such as Ekman and Åmnå's (2012) or Conway's (2000) count as (latent) forms of political participation features such as intentions, interest, or attitudes, most researchers view these dispositions as only factors related to participation. A certain consensus has settled around considering political participation as an action or a behavior (as mentioned in Van Deth's operational definition, 2014). Some difficulties remain at distinguishing proper political participation activities from those of communication among citizens or mobilization oriented to persuade others to participate (see Cantijoch et al. 2014). In this respect, Van Deth (2014) and Theocharis and Van Deth (2018a, 2018b) made a solid effort at reaching an operational definition and developing a practical algorithmic procedure (using eight decision rules) to distinguish what is and what is not to be considered political participation.

Van Deth and Theocharis' contribution improves and clarifies both the survey measurement and classification of participatory actions. Nonetheless, there is still some difficulty within this framework in classifying non-political activities used for political reasons for which the intentions expressed by participants themselves are needed in one way or another. For example, with regards to political consumerism what makes buying a fair-trade brand of coffee an act of political participation is the motivation behind the behavior, not the behavior as such.

Beyond conceptual and taxonomical difficulties, another related complication for the survey measurement of political participation is its incessantly expanding repertoire. This continuous expansion is a challenge for traditional survey measures that fall short at capturing new realities. Our understanding of actual political participation can be distorted if emerging participatory forms are not well-enough seized and represented. Ignoring new realities has normative consequences, both in terms of how we appraise the quality of democracy and with regards to the actual representativity of the levels of participation conveyed. When the activities of groups alienated from institutional politics, like young people who use alternative online channels for political expression, are not adequately reported, this results in a biased understanding of reality.

Among new emerging participation forms, we find a growing collection of social media based or/and enabled activities as well as a compendium of what Theocharis and Van Deth (2018b) call novel, creative, expressive, and personalized forms, be they public, such as urban interventions, flash mobs, deliberative experiments, or private, like individual political podcasts or participatory theatre, among others. They have been defined as a channel of expression for dissatisfied citizens who feel their voice is not heard enough in the political sphere and opt to participate in their own way, through political projects of their own choice, and by expressing their own identity (Bang and Sørensen 1999, Marsh and Akram 2015). This is especially so for the younger generations who feel disengaged from institutional politics and are critical towards politicians and traditional political parties (Dalton 2008, Sloam 2014). Acts of this kind have been labeled as non-political due to their emphasis on self-expression at the expense of instrumentality. These actions have been insufficiently researched and are both difficult to conceptualize and measure. Usual survey instruments do not usually consider them. An empirical analysis using a new survey question to capture these sorts of activities by Theocharis and Van Deth (2018a) established with factor analysis that they tend not to constitute a separate factor of participation but to fall in the protest activities dimension, at least for the case of Germany. Conversely, in that same study, digital networked participation was found to be a separate autonomous dimension in its own right.

The use of the internet and social media for political participation is one main source feeding this expanding repertoire (see chapter 26 in this Handbook). Gibson and Cantijoch (2013) found that e-participation was in fact a multidimensional phenomenon that could be differentiated into distinct interrelated subtypes, one of them being a new social-media-based type of expressive political behavior. They discovered that online and offline participation had a varying degree of integration and independence depending on the type of activities. All in all, these authors pointed out the need for more specific, ample, and consistent indicators of online participation to respond key research questions about their nature, taxonomy, and implications. They employed an opinion survey deliberately designed to measure citizens' online and offline political activities during a UK general election of 2010. Measurement efforts of this sort, implying the design of detailed instruments to capture online participation (and its interplay with offline modes), are not frequent in multinational comparative survey projects. Online, social media based or enabled forms of participation are increasingly popular among the citizenry, but sometimes have been met with lack of enthusiasm and doubts on the side of scholars (Smith 2013).

Research on new forms of participation, especially through the internet and social media, necessarily relates to the behavior of young individuals (see chapter 32 and 51 in this Handbook). Boulianne and Theocharis (2018) from a meta-analysis of more than a hundred survey-based studies about youth, digital media use, and participation, found that the political and civic involvement of youngsters can be facilitated by the way in which those tools are employed. Pickard (2019) argues that quantitative studies and traditional survey measures may nurture a vision of young people as politically apathetic that fosters concern about the future of democracy. However, when the scope of analysis is broadened using a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches allowing young people to express themselves more openly, the picture changes. Some youngsters may feel alienated from institutional politics but still remain interested in politics and political issues. Another strong reason to favor a mixed methods approach is understanding emerging realities of which scholars do not have prior knowledge. Before constructing a survey instrument about youth and participation in new social media forms, qualitative studies are needed to define the contours of the phenomena. This is precisely the strategy utilized by Waeterloos et al. (2021) for designing and validating a social media political participation scale. These authors present an exemplary approach in this regard.

Indicators

Political participation is usually measured in surveys employing lists of specific forms of participation to which the respondent has to answer using a yes/no response format. A time frame, usually 12 months, is provided in many instruments to avoid depicting a citizen as politically active for her entire life. The growing expansion of the repertoire of participation has implied a concomitant extension of the lists of items. Even though the scope of items included has broadened to avoid exclusively concentrating on institutional forms, most large-scale comparative surveys limit the number to five or six major forms of participation.[1] Besides this restriction, the closed-ended format of response constraints the capacity to account for new realities.

A pragmatic and easy way to improve the measurement of participation in such large-scale surveys is the semi open-ended battery proposed by Theocaris and Van Deth (2018a, 2018b). Their approach first consists in implementing a battery of participation activities, containing more items than usual (16), among which some refer to usually overlooked digital networked forms (posting or commenting about politics in social media platforms, or encouraging others to take action on political issues using such platforms). Second, after the yes/no battery they formulate a question about expressive, creative, and individualized modes of participation with an introduction containing examples, and ask whether the respondent has done something similar over the last 12 months (used as a reasonable time frame). In case they did, the respondent is requested to answer the concrete action/s performed in an open-ended format. The semi open-ended question system is in fact a well-known general methodological strategy to deal with topics researchers cannot fully anticipate. It can be applied not only to that type of participation but also to new forms of digital networked activities.

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[1] As an example of a large-scale comparative survey, the sixth wave of the World Values Survey questionnaire included a battery of political protest aside from separate questions about the respondent's participation in the former national elections, and membership (active/inactive) in organizations and social movements (among which parties, trade unions, new social movements, and NGOs). The battery of political protest included the following items: signing a petition, joining in boycotts, attending peaceful demonstrations, joining strikes, and a generic "any other act of protest". The question requested whether the respondent had done any of the activities, might do it in the future, or would never do it. Respondents who did any of the political actions were asked whether they did them during the last year, and how many times ("not at all," "once," "twice," "three times," and "more than three times").

Errors

Having dealt with validity issues, that is, the connection between the definition of the construct and its measurement, now we move onto other types and sources of error. Surveys aimed at capturing political participation use either samples of the general population or focus on studying targeted groups like, for instance, protestors in demonstrations or users of a social media platform. Surveys of the overall population suffer from the common sampling errors affecting other similar surveys. Their specificity, however, is the special role non-response bias plays. Once the sample is drawn, selected individuals can refuse to take part in the study. This refusal is usually non-random: individuals who decline taking part in surveys tend to be less participatory in general (Brehm 1993). As a result, the overall estimates of political participation offered by sample surveys might overestimate the actual participatory levels and may not be accurate enough about the characteristics of non-participants, as only individuals who finally agree to participate in surveys are counted.

Measurement errors related with questionnaire design issues such as question wordings, response options, or item non-response in batteries have also been analyzed. As it is typically the case, research is here also more abundant in the case of voting than in the rest of participatory modes. It is well established that self-reported levels of voter turnout from surveys overestimate actual participation levels. Extant research on vote overreporting has identified different sources behind it, mainly social desirability, and memory failure. Nuanced approaches even distinguish related phenomena such as source monitoring (Johnson, Hashtroudi, and Lindsay 1993), episodic memory, the influence of elapsed time (Stocké 2007), or/and the degree of political involvement (Stocké and Stark 2007).

The social desirability bias occurs when some respondents claim to have voted when in fact they did not, out of the shame of publicly acknowledging that they did not vote. Citizens' tendency to show they follow social norms might be guided by a desire to avoid shame (Panagopoulos 2010). Some respondents feel more obliged than others to provide a socially desirable response to safeguard a positive self-image. This kind of overreporting occurs more frequently among higher educated, politically attentive, and usual voting individuals (Granberg and Holmberg 1991, Karp and Brockington 2005). Memory failure manifests itself when respondents do not remember accurately whether they voted or not.

These two phenomena of social desirability and recall error may not be mutually exclusive (Belli et al. 2006), as memory failure tends to be non-random and biased towards overreporting participation. Respondents are prone to remember their past in more socially desirable ways (Abelson, Loftus, and Greenwald 1992), and recall having voted when they actually did not. They may confuse what they did with some prior occasion in which they truly voted, with their usual participatory behavior, or even with having thought about voting. This phenomenon has been studied within the source-monitoring framework in psychology (Johnson, Hashtroudi, and Lindsay 1993). Another related and relevant aspect is the influence of elapsed time between the election and the interview. The longer the distance, the higher the risk of overreporting would be, due to the decreasing respondent's accessibility to the memories of having voted (Stocké 2007). Most studies have focused on individual-level correlates of overreporting behavior; however, also background elements such as the electoral context have been tested for effect (Karp and Brockington 2005). When aggregate turnout levels rise due to the heightened salience of an election, the tendency to overreport also increases (Górecki 2011). High-stakes elections are commonly paired with higher overreporting. All in all, some interviewees deliberately lie while others fool themselves and consequently also the interviewers/researchers.

Different solutions have been proposed to mitigate the problem of vote overreporting. A dominant approach has been to design question formulations and response options that normalize non-voting to reduce social desirability and offer memory cues to help at recollecting. To reduce overreporting due to social desirability, it is helpful to include a question introduction that portrays non-voting as equally legitimate as voting (Keeter et al. 2002). Additionally, it is advisable to provide face-saving response options allowing the respondent to choose having thought of voting but finally did not, or that they usually vote but not on that occasion (Belli et al. 1999, 2006; Duff et al. 2007). These options are oriented both to focus respondents' attention on potential sources of confusion and alleviate the urge to offer a socially desirable answer. Response options should be ordered so that face-saving alternatives are presented before allowing the respondent's claim to have voted. Such ordering implicitly suggests that non-voting is as valid an option as voting.

The generalizability of these findings outside the United States is still an open research question. For example, a replication of Belli et al.'s (1999, 2006) experiments in Israel did not yield significant effects (Waismel-Manor and Sarid 2011). Another approach followed by Holbrook and Krosnick (2010) consisting in applying the item-count technique has been proven useful to reduce the social desirability bias, at least when the survey mode requires the intervention of an interviewer.

For reducing memory failure, the advice is to use a longer question format where respondents are requested to examine their memories for perceptual information only accessible for those who actually voted in the past election. By emphasizing perceptual information, individuals are expected to recall more precisely their real behavior. Besides that, a lengthy question per se helps at providing additional time and opportunities for the respondent to accurately retrieve the information in memory. In general terms, the timing of the fieldwork also matters: the closer the survey is to the elections, the less memory problems will respondents have.

In comparison to voting, other forms of political participation have received scant attention. It seems plausible to think they may suffer from similar problems of social desirability—at least in the case of legal forms of participation, and memory failure. Keeter et al. (2002) found limited but some effects of question wording experiments to reduce social desirability bias in different forms of political participation. A more recent contribution by Persson and Solevid (2014) applied a factorial experimental design within a Swedish online survey to study the effects of different question introductions and response options on 11 forms of political participation, including institutionalized activities (e.g., voting, party activity, contacting politicians) and non-institutionalized ones (e.g., protest acts, consumer participation). They tested three question introductions: one normalizing inactivity, a neutral version, and one reinforcing social desirability biases. Response options were of two kinds: one simple dichotomous yes/no response, and another providing additional face-saving options to the yes/no response ("have done this before" and "have not done it but consider doing it in the future"). They found an effect of face-saving response options but no impact of the question introduction. This could be due to their limited sample size that made it difficult to detect small effects. In any case, the use of a self-administered survey is a shortcoming for detecting social desirability bias, as this mode is inherently less affected by it.

Comparability

Are the measures of political participation cross-culturally equivalent so that we can safely compare through different contexts? The increasing availability of international surveys boosts comparative research (see for example chapters 29, 30, or 49 in this Handbook); however, the risk of comparing what is not actually comparable grows in parallel. To compare the levels of political participation across countries, assessing measurement equivalence appears as a necessary step to provide unbiased estimates. An adequate survey scale of political participation would allow measuring the latent concept in its different dimensions and levels of intensity. Besides incorporating new realities that expand the existing repertoire of political participation, a good instrument must enable to test the measurement equivalence of the construct across cultural contexts, such as nation-states or historical periods. There is a clear shortage of studies attempting this kind of endeavor in the political participation literature. Some exceptions are, however, those of Garcia Albacete (2014) studying the general concept of political participation, and Quaranta (2013, 2012) verifying the comparability of political protest across countries and over time.

Quaranta (2013) tested the cross-cultural equivalence of the political protest scale developed by Barnes and Kaase (1979) in 20 Western European countries using a battery included in the fourth wave of the European Values Study. Even though that battery is widely used, no prior study on its measurement equivalence had been performed. He used Mokken Scale Analysis (MSA)[2] as the empirical strategy to canonically assess the scale's measurement equivalence across countries. According to his results, for assessing whether the scale has a sufficient degree of homogeneity, it has to be applied in 19 out of 20 countries. If the target is that each step of the scale has the same meaning, only 10 countries out of 20 may be used. Besides that, using less items of the scale (four or three) grants the comparability of the concept of political protest across 16 countries. All in all, his measurement equivalence analysis indicates that for rigorously comparing the political protest scale across that group of nations it is necessary to both restrict the number of countries compared and the amount of items of the scale.

Garcia Albacete goes beyond the "identical instruments" approach to test for cross-country equivalence by developing equivalent measures with the "identity-equivalence procedure" (following Van Deth 1986 and Przeworski and Teune 1966). With an eye on the specificity of young individuals, she examined the political participation scale derived from the list of items contained on the first round of the European Social Survey. Employing identical instruments, as done by Quaranta (2013), could impose a number of shortcomings on the valid measurement of concepts cross-culturally. Besides losing cases and items, it can prevent capturing the whole concept of political participation in specific countries. Garcia Albacete applied the "identity-equivalence procedure" also using MSA and following a two-steps procedure. In a first step, MSA was applied exploratorily to look for one or more scales on which the different participatory actions could be ordered for all countries in the pooled sample.[3] The second step consisted of the evaluation of the scales for each country separately. Equivalent measures were constructed by building on the identical scales of the first step and testing possible additions among the remaining items for each country. This procedure, customized for the specificity of each country, apparently increased the reliability coefficients of the two scales that originally emerged from the MSA. All in all, the identity-equivalence procedure allowed García Albacete to obtain scales of institutional and non-institutional participation that captured the underlying concept of political participation more reliably in each country.

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[2] MSA is a nonparametric scaling method of the item response theory family that works better than Multi-Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MGCFA) for the dichotomous items of the usual survey participation batteries forming an ordinal scale. One of the advantages of MSA is that it does not impose unidimensionality. The technique allows examining the structure and dimensionality of the latent concept of political participation as well as employing a confirmatory approach. In addition, MSA offers the possibility of testing the scale (or scales) across different groups, and consequently assessing whether the measurement instrument is valid cross-nationally.

The problem of comparability not only refers to spatial but also to temporal contexts. Even within the same country, comparability can be in question when assessing a dimension of participation over time. As an example, Quaranta (2012) analyzed whether the latent structure of the concept of unconventional political participation was equivalent over a long period in Italy, so that average estimates could be compared meaningfully across time observations. In Italy, modes of unconventional participation changed from radical opposition to the institutionalization of protest activities. Like in other countries, protest actions such as demonstrations, boycotts, petitions, and other forms of contentious acts were being normalized and included in the usual citizen's repertoire. Applying MGCFA to a battery of five items from 1976 to 2009, Quaranta shows that the latent concept of unconventional participation can be considered equivalent over time in Italy. His analysis also shows a significant increase in this type of political participation and a change in its distribution.

When studying political participation, García-Albacete as well as Quaranta are inclined to limit the scope of comparisons to cases within most similar systems' design of consolidated democracies, to increase the possibilities of achieving equivalence. In still-developing democracies, the way in which several modes of participation are used by their citizens is very different as compared with consolidated democracies. In view of these authors' comparative studies that mix those differing contexts are potentially subject to high levels of bias, according to the usual standards of the dimensional logic of measurement equivalence.

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[3] Two scales emerged: the first captured institutional forms of participation (voting, contacting politicians, donating money, and working for a political party), whereas the second scale included protest activities (signing a petition, displaying badges, attending lawful demonstrations and participating in illegal protest activities). Some items were rejected due to their low scalability (buycotting products, media consumption, and discussing politics) or monotonicity violations (boycotting products, in the second scale).

Research Designs

Beyond conceptualization and measurement, analyzing participation with survey data requires a specific research design, that is, the delimitation of a necessarily restricted part of reality that will be observed and analyzed. In most cases research designs are constrained because resources to gather new data are limited. On many occasions research designs are based on existing surveys. In this section we overview some of the main approaches to analyzing political participation according to the research design. Each of these comes with its own specific combination of strengths and limitations.

Cross-sectional Surveys

Cross-sectional surveys involve the observation of participation at one time point, covering a representative sample of the population of a territorial unit, typically a country. Studies taking this kind of research design have focused in particular on the individual determinants of political participation, identifying key predictors (such as resources or motivations) as well as fundamental patterns of inequality in political participation. Verba and Nie's *Participation in America* (Verba and Nie 1972), Parry, Moyser, and Day's *Participation and Democracy in Britain* (Parry, Moyser, and Day 1992); Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's *Voice and Equality* (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995) are among the most significant contributions in the field, based on single country cross-sectional data (notably the US). There are also more recent contributions, such as the one by Zukin et al. (2006) on political and civic engagement, but the times of single-country monographic studies seem to be gone.

Some studies have focused on countries other than the US and the UK, but not very many. The source of comparative data for less resourceful countries has come from the joint effort of comparative enterprises. This comparative perspective was present from the very early attempts to empirically analyze political behavior, such as *The Civic Culture* (Almond and Verba 1963), or *Participation and Political Equality* (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978). Some of the most significant theoretical and empirical contributions came from specific comparative projects, such as the *Citizen, Involvement and Democracy Project* (Deth, Montero, and Westholm 2007) or the *Livewhat* project (Grasso 2018). Other more institutionalized comparative projects such as the *World Value Surveys* or the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems* have also contributed to the analyses of rich comparative data on participation and its correlates (Gallego 2015; Ikeda, Kobayashi, and Hoshimoto 2008; Karp and Banducci 2007; Karp and Banducci 2008; Norris 2002). These comparative analyses have allowed to explore how people engage in different modes of participation, how this participation is different in different countries, and how contextual features may condition levels of participation. They have also allowed to assess how individual predictors of participation may have different effects in different places, and the extent to which participation may be unequal, that is, highly conditioned by individual socioeconomic resources.

The expansion to incorporate the time dimension is more recent. Although some of these established comparative surveys, such as the WVS/EVS or the CSES, do indeed have a longitudinal design and go back to the 1990s, there are few observations regarding political participation along time. Longitudinal analysis of cross-sectional data on individual political participation has been facilitated by the European Social Survey since the early 2000s. Currently in its tenth wave, the ESS covers 20 exciting years of European politics, including indicators of political participation.

For descriptive and comparative purposes cross-sectional data are fundamental. Without them we would be unable to assess any trend or cross-national difference. Their main limitation for the analysis of political participation comes from the difficulty of inferring causal relations where we can only observe correlations, and where there are many potential unobserved confounders that had to be left off the questionnaire because of time constraints. Some alternative research designs are better equipped to deal with these endogeneity concerns.

Panel Surveys

In contrast to cross-sectional survey data that include one observation for each individual at a single time point, panel data involve the observation of the same individual along time on several occasions. While panel data have long been used for the analysis of social and economic questions related to inequality, social mobility, or poverty (see for instance the British Household Panel Survey BHPS, or the German Socio-Economic Panel SOEP), attention to political questions in this large social science infrastructure has been marginal until recently. Today panel data are becoming increasingly popular precisely because they allow to address the main limitation of cross-sectional surveys: identifying causal effects. Some of the existing panel data that include measures of political participation are the Swiss Household Panel (Giugni and Grasso 2016), or the POLAT Panel (Hernández et al. 2021). Several election studies have included a panel component in their structure which typically includes measures of political engagement (as the American ANES, the British BES, or the German Longitudinal Election Study GLES).

Panel surveys are less frequent than cross-sectional surveys because they require more resources and a long-term commitment that is hard to find in social sciences research beyond the wealthiest nations. However, they have a number of advantages that are making them increasingly popular. The main one is that, by exploiting within-individual variation, they allow to control for any source of between-individual variation. In the case of participation, for example, they allow to assess how (within-individual changes in) individual resources and attitudes may generate (within-individual changes in) political participation, controlling for any observed *or unobserved* time-invariant predictors of participation, such as sex or personality (Muñoz, Anduiza, and Rico 2014). Panel data allow also to look at the consequences, and not only the causes of participation. Changes in participation may produce changes in political attitudes or voting behavior (Mateos, Galais, and Anduiza 2021; Giugni and Grasso 2016). The larger the number of waves of the panel the more within-individual variation that will be available for analytical purposes. On the other hand, the more time an individual spends in a panel the more likely there are learning and other panel effects that reduce the representativeness of the sample.

Surveys to Specific Groups

General population surveys offer information that might not be detailed enough for researchers about aspects such as motivations for participation, contexts, specific issues, or types of action. They may also include too few people in some categories of interest, such as the young, minorities, or activists. These limitations can be overcome by surveying targeted groups.

This emerging approach has its own specific difficulties. It has been used in the analysis of new participatory forms that involve social media platforms and young individuals (e.g., Waeterloos et al. 2021). Migrants and ethnic minorities may be more affected by non-response than the autochthonous population due to language and other reasons. The analysis of their political participation may require a number of questions on residential patterns, origin, or specific organizational engagement that may not be available in general population surveys. It may also be necessary to carry out the fieldwork using different languages and strategies. For all these reasons, specific surveys have been carried out to analyze their patterns of political participation, such as the LOCALMULTIDEM project (Morales and Giugni 2016, Giugni and Grasso 2020). For a detailed analysis of the different aspects involved in surveying migrant populations see (Méndez and Font 2013).

A special case of surveys to specific groups are surveys among participants in protest events. Protesters are approached by interviewers during the demonstration, and contacted so that they fill a questionnaire (Van Stekelenburg et al. 2012). These protest events surveys are special in that they sample in what is typically considered the dependent variable: participation itself, as they can only access a sample of those taking part in the protest. For this reason, potential analysis can only be addressed at understanding or explaining properties that vary within participants, such as whether they are experienced or first time (Verhulst and Walgrave 2009, Saunders et al. 2012), or whether they have been mobilized through different channels (Anduiza, Cristancho, and Sabucedo 2013, Giugni and Grasso 2019).

These surveys are excellent to provide rich contextualized evidence of the specific protests, as they are typically integrated in fieldwork that incorporate information on the staging organizations, issues, and frames. While the measurement of participation in demonstrations in general population surveys is usually restricted to a single item that does not differentiate different specific protests, these protest event surveys allow to measure participation in different specific events. However, they are not adequate to explain why some people turnout to protests and others do not, for the reason that they do not include non-participants. These surveys must also pay attention to sampling methods to limit potential biases (Walgrave and Verhulst 2011).

Ideally, these specific group surveys should not be completely disconnected from general population surveys so that data can be contextualized and meaningfully interpreted. This can sometimes be done by including a subsample of individuals outside the category of interest so that the values of the group of interest can be compared to the general population. This is done when youth surveys include a subsample of non-young people too. Otherwise, what we might interpret as low political participation specific to young people may actually be reflecting the general pattern of low political participation in the general population. In some other cases, for instance when surveying protesters, this comparison may be achieved by wording questions in a way that can be comparable to items included in surveys to the general population around the same time.

Recent Innovations: Unexpected Events during Survey Fieldwork and Linking Survey to Other Data

A recently developed research design exploits the occurrence of unexpected events during the course of survey fieldwork (Muñoz, Falcó-Gimeno, and Hernández 2020). Individuals are treated as assigned as if random to a control (before) and experimental (after) conditions, thereby allowing to estimate the consequences of the event. For this research design to identify valid causal estimates it requires several identifying assumptions, including excludability (all differences between respondents before and after are solely the result of the event and not due to collateral events, simultaneous events or unrelated time trends) and ignorability (the potential outcomes must be independent from the event). Researchers using this strategy should pay close attention to imbalances in the before/after groups, potential problems of reachability, and attrition among respondents.

This strategy has been used to explore the consequences of protest outbreaks on political attitudes (Muñoz and Anduiza 2019; Frye and Borisova 2019). It is adequate when the interest is on the identification of the consequences of such events. It is, however, unable to unpack the bundle of elements that come together under a single "event." For example, protests that turn violent are often the result of different decisions of several actors, including movement organizations, police, authorities, individual participants, etc. which cannot be assessed separately with this research design.

Integrating survey data with digital trace data is another innovative research design (Stier et al. 2019). In this case the perspective is exploratory, opening opportunities to observe with nonintrusive tools online behavior, and to connect it with the attitudes, behaviors, and socio-demographics typically measured in surveys. This may be particularly useful to asses some predictors of participation that have been found to be prone to measurement error, such as political news consumption (Otto et al. 2021). Some more specific questions related to measurement have also been tackled with the combination of survey and digital communication data (see (Ohme et al. 2020) for donations).

However, this combined strategy is not without challenges. Survey and computational social science respond to different paradigms, use different research methods, and are at different levels of conceptual elaboration. This research design is so far better suited for description than for the assessment of causal relations.

LOOKING FORWARD

This brief summary of how participation can be analyzed with surveys leads us to conclude with a number of questions that should deserve further attention in the near future. From a conceptual perspective, surveys will need to keep up with the challenge of a growing and diversifying object of study with fuzzy boundaries, where conceptual debates complicate the development of valid and reliable indicators. In our view, good survey instruments can only be developed when the ideas behind are clear. In the effort to conceptualize political participation we need to pay more attention to the dimensions that are behind different modes so as to produce meaningful typologies. In addition, the development of measurement instruments faces a tradeoff between innovation and comparability. Specific surveys can develop detailed questions including new modes, allowing for an intensive approach suitable for description and exploration. Cross country and time comparison face more limitations in terms of measurement. The challenge is further complicated by the fact that participation in general population surveys is often measured without any reference to the specific political issues that motivate it, which is also a pending question.

From a methodological perspective, as with all surveys, researchers need to face the increasing non-response rates and the difficulty to produce representative samples, particularly dramatic in telephone-based samples and interviews. The tendency, aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is towards less face-to-face interviews, and more online self-administered questionnaires, for which well-defined quality criteria remain to be established and specially interiorized. Internet will prevail as an administration mode in all likelihood, but sampling questions need to be addressed independently of the mode in order minimize errors.

Future research should also further investigate measurement errors in participatory activities different than voting. There is still room for studies dealing with wording and response options, such as evaluating the effects of different temporal frames of reference. Exploring the effect of survey mode is also advisable. Broadening the scope of the studies beyond the United States is key for the generalizability of the findings. Finally, the analysis and understanding of political participation would benefit from the development of the more innovative methods that connect surveys with macro-events or with digital trace data, that so far have dealt with participation only marginally.

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CHAPTER 15

EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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In the last twenty years, experimental approaches to the study of political participation have surged in popularity, coinciding with an upswing in experimentation in the social sciences more generally. Experimental studies conducted in computer laboratories (labs), or similarly highly controlled settings, have a long tradition of examining collective action and altruistic behavior. While providing valuable theoretical insights, lab experiments can lack the external validity of real-world settings. This has implications for our understanding of political participation, which necessarily takes place in environments uncontrolled by researchers.

Starting with Green and Gerber's seminal Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) designs in the early 2000s (e.g., Gerber and Green 2000; for an overview, see Green and Gerber 2019), most field experimental studies on political participation have examined voter mobilization. More recent studies have expanded in scope to include political donations, petition signing, activist recruitment, and even protest participation. The now ubiquitous use of experiments embedded in surveys has encouraged the study of a widening repertoire of political acts, including online activities.

In this chapter we discuss the contribution of experiments to the study of political participation. Following de Rooij (2011), we define political participation as "voluntary activities by ordinary people directed towards influencing, directly or indirectly, political outcomes at various levels of the political system" (p. 160, see also, Brady 1999: 737; Verba et al. 1995: 38–39). Such an action-oriented definition excludes, among other things, information seeking, political attitudes, and organizational memberships, although these are important explanatory factors for political action. The definition includes voting, participating in political campaigns, and other forms of political activism (e.g., protesting, signing petitions, donating money), as well as political consumerism (e.g., boycotting or "buycotting"). We focus, therefore, on experiments where the outcome of interest is individual political action, or—as is sometimes the case when outcomes are measured through surveys—intentions to act.

In the next section, we discuss the benefits of the experimental approach, trace the rise of experimentation in the study of political participation, and highlight some innovative designs. We focus mainly on experiments conducted in realistic settings—whether online or in the field. As such, we mostly draw from research in the disciplines of political science, and to a lesser extent sociology, in which the majority of such experiments on political participation have been published. Historically, perceived feasibility has been a major factor in determining the types of theoretical arguments and political activities taken up in experimental designs; however, recent work increasingly tests more nuanced theoretical mechanisms and examines a broader repertoire of political acts. We focus on one specific area that has shown great promise to advance the literature: experiments on the role of others in decisions to participate politically. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the promises and pitfalls of political participation experiments.

The Use of Experiments in Social Science

Experiments are a key methodological approach for those seeking to answer causal questions. In experiments, the cause (also called the treatment or intervention) is commonly controlled by the researcher—it is manipulable. The logic of experimentation relies on randomized assignment of subjects to treatment and control conditions to make unbiased causal inferences. Randomization implies that subjects are assigned with a known probability, between zero and one, to different conditions. This ensures that, in expectation, there are no observable or unobservable differences between groups prior to treatment.

Typically, social science experiments are divided into lab, field, and survey experiments. Lab experiments give researchers more control, including "the ability to create environments that simply do not exist in observational data" (Morton and Williams 2008: 346). Lab experiments have been widely used to study collective action and pro-social behavior in the disciplines of economics and psychology. Indeed, some have argued that political science largely inherited current experimental praxis from these two disciplines (Morton and Vasquez-Cortes 2020). A review of this literature falls outside the scope of this chapter, but we will highlight some key insights. (For a more extensive treatment see Batson and Powell 2003; Becker 2012; Chaudhuri 2011; Ledyard 1995; Poteete et al. 2010). While assuredly benefitting from this work, in the past twenty years, political scientists and sociologists have begun developing their own experimental designs and stepping outside the lab.

While the definition of field experiments[1] is open to interpretation, in contrast to lab experiments, they share an emphasis on "naturalism" (Ditlmann and Paluck 2015), mimicking real-world conditions under which a phenomenon might occur to enhance external validity (Gerber and Green 2011). Field experiments have gained popularity in political science, inspired by Gerber and Green's work. Yet, in the early years of the new millennium, they remained relatively rare (McDermott 2002). This led some scholars to argue that political science was missing out on knowledge that could be gained from such designs (Green and Gerber 2003).

Finally, survey experiments can be administered in the field or the lab, but are increasingly conducted online. While often associated with convenience samples, it is possible to obtain nationally representative or "population-based" samples (for an excellent discussion, see (Mutz 2001). Initially popularized by Paul Sniderman and his colleagues at the Survey Research Center at the University of California at Berkeley (Gaines et al. 2007), survey experiments really took off after 2006. Hainmueller et al. (2014), for instance, found that three leading political science journals published 72 survey experiments between 2006 and 2010.

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[1] Also called randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

The Growth in Experimental Studies of Political Participation

Before 2000, experimentation in political science and sociology could best be described as fitful. The first two experiments in political behavior—both on voting, and appearing in the *American Political Science Review* (APSR)—were published by Gosnell (1926) and Eldersveld (1956). In total, between 1956 and 2004, 57 experimental studies were published in the APSR, the majority after 1992 (Druckman et al. 2006).

To better illustrate the increased popularity of the use of experiments to study political participation in the two disciplines, we conducted a search of six leading general interest journals[2] and four high-ranking quantitative (subfield) journals[3] and found 784 experimental studies[4] published between 1991 and 2020. Experimentation is more common in political science (a total of 572 studies) than in sociology (212 studies). Of the experimental studies, 27 percent (212 studies) focused on political participation, 16 of which were published in sociology and 196 in political science journals.[5]

The results of our search accord with previous findings—the use of experiments has grown rapidly over time (especially in political science). This growth is especially pronounced in studies of political participation: grouping results in five-year periods shows a thirty-fold increase from the 1991–1995 period to the 2016–2020 period (from 3 to 92 studies); whereas the number of experimental studies focusing on other substantive topics

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[2] *American Journal of Political Science*, APSR, *The Journal of Politics*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, and *Social Forces*.

[3] *Electoral Studies*, *Political Behavior, European Sociological Review*, and *Social Science Research.*

[4] Defined as including direct references to experimentation in their title, keywords or abstract. We excluded studies that were methodological commentaries on experimentation, meta-analyses of experiments, formal models, simulations without human subjects, natural experiments, or quasi-experiments.

[5] We used our definition of political participation to determine the focus of each experimental study (participation or "other"). Included studies focus on a variety of activities (or intentions to act), both on- and offline, such as registering to vote, voting, donating to, or actively participating in campaigns (whether electoral or advocacy-focused), protesting, signing petitions, contacting politicians, and political consumerism. Example titles include "Political Participation and Civic Courage: The Negative Effect of Transparency on Making Small Campaign Contributions" (La Raja 2014); "The Social Costs of Public Political Participation: Evidence from a Petition Experiment in Lebanon" (Paler et al. 2018); "NIMBYism—A Re-Examination of the Phenomenon" (Esaiasson 2014); "Partisan Consumerism: Experimental Tests of Consumer Reactions to Corporate Political Activity" (Panagopoulos et al. 2020); "Which Identity Frames Boost Support for and Mobilization in the #BlackLivesMatter Movement? An Experimental Test" (Bonilla and Tillery 2020); and "The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment" (Gerber and Green 2000).

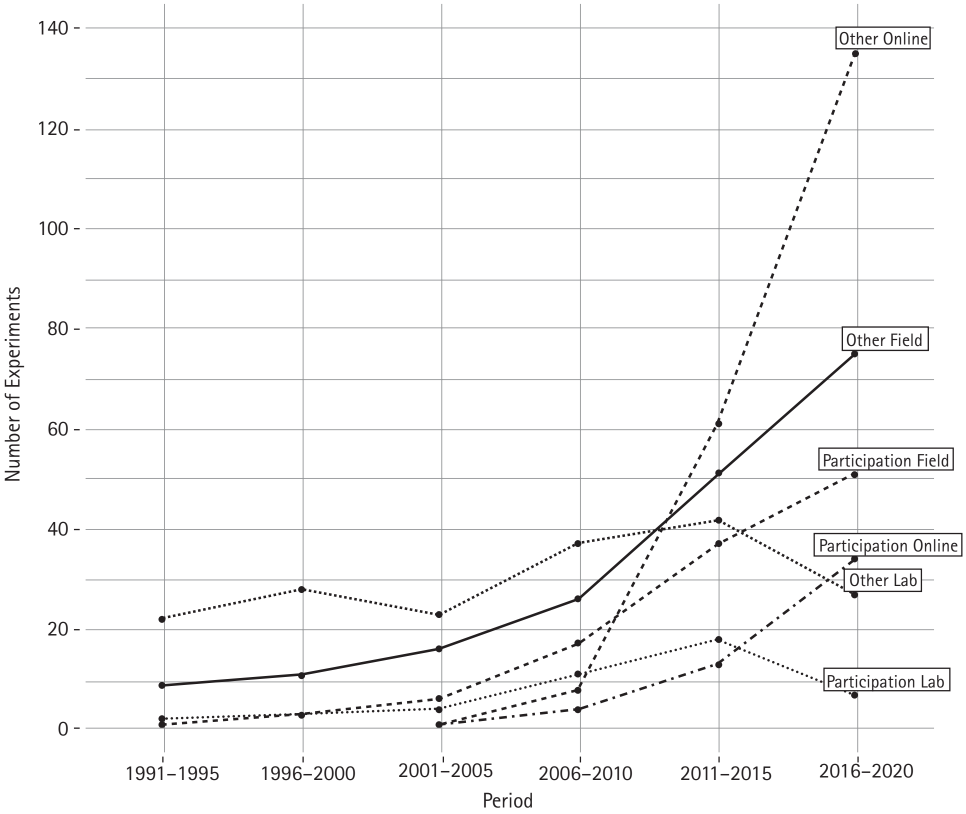

FIGURE 15.1 The Number of Experimental Studies Published in Selected Journals, by Time Period, Setting, and Substantive Topic (Political Participation versus Other)

increased eight-fold: from 31 to 237. The biggest jump occurred after 2005: in the first three time periods (1991–1995, 1996–2000, and 2001–2005), the number of political participation experiments increased slowly—followed by exponential increases in the later time periods.

Figure 15.1 shows that the online setting is most common in our sample of experiments, especially recently. This setting represented 169 studies in the 2016–2020 period (51 percent of 329 studies). In fact, the increased use of internet experiments substantially contributed to the overall rise in the use of experiments. However, most of the studies in this period (135, or 80 percent) concerned substantive areas other than political participation. Between 1991 and 2020, field settings were most common in experimental studies of political participation (115 of 212 studies, or 54 percent). Political participation field experiments have also experienced the greatest growth over time (from a single study in the first time period to 51 studies in the most recent). This is partly due to the popularity of voter turnout studies.[6] Overall, lab and online settings are about as common in political participation experiments (45 and

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[6] Of the studies published between 1991 and 2020, 29 had titles containing the word "turnout" or the phrase "voter mobilization" or "electoral mobilization"; of these, more than 90 percent (26) were field experiments.

52 studies, respectively). While they have been increasing in popularity, online experiments are relatively underrepresented in political participation research when compared to other substantive areas.

In sum, we find a rapid increase in the use of experimentation in political science and sociology, particularly on the topic of political participation. The distribution of political participation experiments by setting is quite different from that of other substantive areas, however.

Types of Experiments

As experimental designs become more sophisticated, the traditional distinctions between lab, field, and survey experiments have begun to break down. We therefore find it useful to distinguish experiments along multiple dimensions, namely: 1) setting; 2) subject pool; 3) intervention type; and 4) outcome measurement. This distinction allows for a more nuanced discussion of trade-offs in experimental designs, as well as more useful and specific guidance on executing them. We discuss each dimension and provide some examples of studies with creative design elements.

Setting

We follow Morton and Williams (2008) in treating the internet as one of three possible settings—the other two being lab and field. Internet experiments share some features with other settings. Like field experiments, they can provide a naturalistic setting; yet, like lab experiments, researchers can control the interface with which participants engage. Online settings also present unique possibilities. For example, some platforms provide tools to closely monitor participants' attention and performance on experimental tasks (Erisen 2018) or allow information to be collected on social ties with other individuals online.

Common types of online experiments include survey experiments and social media experiments. An innovative example of the former comes from Kam and Deichert's (2020) study of political consumerism, wherein the authors recruited survey participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (an online crowd-sourcing platform), as well as a nationally representative sample from YouGov's standing panel. Kam and Deichert (2020) find that negative information induces boycotting more powerfully than positive information promotes "buycotting" behavior.

The internet is also the natural setting for social media experiments. Coppock et al. (2016) conducted an experiment on Twitter, measuring the effects of social media engagement on support for a nonprofit advocacy organization. Treatments take the form of public tweets and private messages, with the latter being "far superior … in generating supportive behavior in the form of online petition signatures, tweets, or even retweets" (idem: 124–125).

Settings can change the behavior of respondents. People may behave differently in a lab—for instance, the presence of observers tends to accentuate pro-social behavior (Mutz 2001). The latter issue partially accounts for the popularity of online experiments—researchers are less likely to inadvertently influence results when they are not physically present (Mummolo and Peterson 2019). Web surveys can also minimize social desirability biases in comparison to in-person designs (Couper 2017). (For a fuller discussion of survey research, see Anduiza and Tormos, this volume).

Subject Pool

An important consideration in experimental design is the extent to which subjects are representative of a population of interest. The use of representative samples allows researchers to make unbiased inferences about this population. When relying on convenience samples, it is difficult to quantify the level of uncertainty surrounding results for the purposes of generalization (Gerber and Green 2012). For example, voter turnout research is often conducted in a single geographic location—but this can cause an overestimation of treatment effects for high-turnout locations in high-salience elections (Fieldhouse et al. 2014). Researchers should be clear about the population of interest—to whom do a given study's findings directly apply—as well as to whom might they most reasonably generalize, and under what conditions. This latter question is related to the phenomenon of heterogeneous effects: the same treatment may not affect everyone the same way in all circumstances. For example, Arceneaux and Nickerson (2009) re-analyzed a series of voter turnout experiments and find considerable differences in the effect of voter mobilization campaigns, depending on the overall turnout rate of the election.

The historical and rather problematic reliance of lab experiments on Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (or WEIRD) samples is now well known (Heinrich et al. 2010). It is highly questionable to assume, without evidence, that results will generalize from student to non-student populations (Mutz 2001). As such, lab experiments have moved beyond convenience samples of undergraduate students, paying greater attention to diversity. Lab-in-field studies now regularly recruit community samples. One example is Matland and Murray's (2013) study of backlash against social-pressure-based voter mobilization techniques, which uses a sample of Texans originally summoned for jury duty. They find that such techniques create consequential psychological reactance against candidates who use them, affecting voter support.

Other forms of experimentation are not immune to sampling concerns either. In the field, for example, researchers must often take whom they can get—although there are exceptions (e.g., direct mail experiments often sample within a given geographic area). Online experiments frequently use convenience samples, but can also recruit from nationally representative panels purchased from vendors.

The power of a study to detect effects is another important consideration with respect to the subject pool. Increasing the sample size reduces the possibility of a false negative. In all cases, the bigger and more representative the sample, the more convincing generalization to the population of interest becomes.

Intervention Type

The three most common types of intervention are real-life type scenarios, interventions administered as part of surveys, and behavioral games. Examples of the first type include doorstep or direct mail interventions, and the use of (faux) newspaper or magazine articles. Priming or salience cues can be embedded in a survey, along with differences in question wording or order. Survey experimental designs can also mimic real-world forms of political participation, such as voting (Gerber and Green 2011). Behavioral games are rule-bound interactions combined with a goal or motivational narrative (Mutz 2001). They include deliberation and trust games, as well as designs that induce preferences through incentives.

While different forms of intervention come with different implementation concerns, researchers must define the "treatment" clearly enough to determine who has and has not been treated (Gerber and Green 2012). For instance, each type of intervention can take place "between subjects" (comparison between groups) or "within subjects" (comparison of subjects to themselves)[7] and might impact subjects not initially targeted by the researcher (known as spillover effects). Thought should also be given to what part of the treatment is really doing the "work" in bringing about the outcome.

Outcome Measurement

There are three broad types of outcome measurements typically used in experiments—survey measurements (e.g., a post-test), third-party data (e.g., voting records), and direct behavioral measurements (e.g., clicking a link or signing a petition). Different interventions naturally lend themselves to different types of outcome measurement. For survey interventions, behavioral outcomes might be contained within the survey itself—an option to sign a petition, donate to a cause, or sign up to be contacted by an interest group. For more direct interventions, the outcome can be contained within the experiment (e.g., opening an email conditional on the subject line) or be external (e.g., voting in a subsequent election).

Krupnikov and Levine (2019) study the impact of different types of information on political engagement using some creative outcome measurements. In two related field experiments, they measure differences in monetary donations to an interest group, and willingness to open an interest group's email. In addition to voting, Hjortskov et al. (2018) use participation in a government policy feedback survey to assess the impact of involving underrepresented citizens in the production of services on their likelihood to use their political voice.

Recent Experimental Insights—the Role of Others

In social science, experimental studies tend to focus on the motivations and behaviors of individuals, testing theoretical causes of individual political action. The question of why individuals engage in political action has been described as a collective action problem, often called the paradox of participation. That is, given 1) an individual's exceedingly small probability of being pivotal in affecting the outcome resulting from collective action (e.g., voting, demonstrating); 2) that the individual cannot be excluded from benefitting from this outcome; and 3) the substantial costs associated with most participatory acts, individuals should not be expected to participate. Yet, they often do.

Explanations for why individuals choose to engage in political actions and/or are effectively mobilized[8] to do so, tend to emphasize the role of selective incentives: benefits (or sanctions) only accessible to individuals who engage in the political act. For instance, according to well-known participation scholars Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), political actors and groups induce people to participate directly (direct mobilization) or provide information to be carried through social networks (indirect mobilization) (idem: 25). This mobilization operates through "complex relationships of social identity, expectation and obligation" (idem: 176).

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[7] This is also sometimes referred to as a "pre- and post-" design.

[8] Mobilization can be defined as "an intentional and non-coercive action by a political actor or ordinary citizen to cause another individual to participate" (Foos and de Rooij 2019: 1).

Findings from lab experiments on collective action problems are directly relevant to the study of political action (Chaudhuri 2011; Ledyard 1995; Ostrom et al. 1992) and suggest that social incentives are indeed central to explaining individual choices to participate. Specifically, lab experiments have shown how non-binding commitments (cheap talk) help overcome collective action problems; how individuals are often willing to pay a price to punish perceived norm violations in the absence of authority (costly sanctioning); and how following collectively decided rules of behavior (norm adherence) generates social trust. These results hold across diverse populations.

An increasing body of field experimental evidence confirms the importance of social considerations to decisions to turn out to vote. In summarizing a vast number of experimental GOTV studies, Green and Gerber (2019: 179) show the effectiveness of making voters feel wanted at the polls, using messages that build on pre-existing motivations to vote, and reminders of civic duty in mobilizing voters to turn out. Conversely, ineffective ways to get voters to the polls are simply reminding them to vote, providing purely informational content, and telling voters why they should vote for a particular candidate. The extent to which these insights translate to other forms of political participation has yet to be fully examined using experimental designs.

Although the role of others in motivating political action is well established (see, for example, Schlozman and Brady, this volume), questions remain about why other people are so important. Following Foos and de Rooij (2019), we consider three theoretical explanations: others provide us with information, whether practical information or social cues; others exert social pressure, enforcing participation norms; and participating in political action together provides a sense of belonging. (Bridgman and Stolle, this volume, describe similar processes in terms of mobilization spheres). We discuss results from recent experimental studies providing empirical support or suggestive evidence for each explanation, and point to areas for future research. In doing so, we illustrate how experiments aid in advancing the literature.

Information

Others in our social networks may impact our decision to participate by providing information about when, where, and how to do so and about the issues at stake. Most studies focus on direct mobilization, but information can travel through networks. While these studies show that providing information to voters generally does little to increase their turnout (Green and Gerber 2019), it can be effective at promoting registration, and to some extent turnout, among low turnout groups. For instance, Gerber et al. (2015) find that a single mailer reminding convicted felons to register to vote can recover a large proportion of the difference between pre- and post- incarceration voting rates. Nickerson (2015) finds a door-to-door effort particularly effective at increasing voter registration in streets with lower socioeconomic status on average (see also Braconnier et al. 2017). And Mahéo (2017) shows that providing access to a Voting Advice Application reduces participatory inequality between voters with different levels of education. Finally, several studies show that mobilization messages targeting minority groups such as Latinos (Bedolla and Michelson 2012; Matland and Murray 2012; Michelson 2003; 2005) or immigrants (Pons and Liegey 2019) using traditional GOTV efforts, as well as Latinos (Panagopoulos and Green 2011) and Native Americans (de Rooij and Green 2017) using targeted radio ads, can be effective at increasing turnout.

A particular kind of information that collective action scholars have long recognized as important, is information on the number of other individuals participating: the more individuals (in our social network) who participate, the more likely we are to participate ourselves (Granovetter 1978; Hedström 1994; Rolfe 2012). A variety of theoretical mechanisms for this relationship have been proposed (see Vaillant et al. 2015), among which are increased visibility of collective action as it spreads through networks, changing cost-benefit considerations about the efficacy of collective action, and information functioning as a descriptive norm—providing a cue for how to behave.

Some experimental studies have taken advantage of the popularity of online petitions to test the causal impact of the number of signatories on an individual's likelihood of signing. Margetts et al. (2011) show that (only) large numbers of signatories (more than one million) increase individuals' willingness to sign and Vaillant et al. (2015) show that a sudden surge in signatories on existing petitions increases the subsequent growth rate in the number of signatures. Yet, the latter study also reveals an important caveat to existing knowledge, namely that growth is not simply self-reinforcing, but highly erratic. Vaillant et al. (2015) suggest that this is due to sudden increases in the number of signatories that occur when key "secondary mobilizers" sign on.

Signing an online petition is a low-cost activity, and the number of signatories might not reflect support for the cause in individuals' own social networks. Using an online social network experiment with 61-million individuals on Facebook, Bond et al. (2012) show how a voter mobilization message that included information on where to vote increased not only political self-expression and information-seeking, but also real-world turnout by 0.39 percentage-points—but only when the message included photos of friends who indicated to have voted. In addition, the message had an indirect mobilizing effect on the turnout of (close) friends of those initially targeted, as well as friends of those friends (idem).

On a much smaller scale, experimental studies on intimate networks, consisting of "individuals connected via strong ties, like family, household members or friends" (Foos and de Rooij 2019: 1) show that mobilization messages targeted at one household member spill over onto other household members, increasing their turnout (Bhatti et al. 2017; Foos and de Rooij 2017a; Nickerson 2008; Sinclair et al. 2012). Political discussion with randomly assigned college dorm roommates in the first year of college increases participation in political groups and rates of contact with elected officials, but not turnout, both in university and later in life (Klofstad 2015). Another study relying on the random assignment of first-year college roommates assesses the impact of being assigned a Black roommate on White students' intergroup attitudes and behavior (Boisjoly et al. 2006). The study shows that being assigned a Black roommate increases support for diversity policies and contact rates, but has no effect five years later on agreeing with the importance of "participat[ing] actively in civil rights organizations" (idem: 1901); however, the sample size of the study was small.

While experiments that use random interventions in the context of on- and offline social networks are still rare in political participation research, they show great promise and have been increasingly used to study other types of behavior.[9] There is work yet to be done on how the characteristics of a social network (e.g., heterogeneousness or types of ties) impact the effectiveness of interventions. The mechanism through which indirect mobilization through social media or intimate networks has its effects also remains an open question. Although information provision is certainly one, findings from the studies cited in this section of the chapter might also be interpreted as evidence of compliance with social expectations or pursuit of belonging.

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[9] For examples, see Centola (2010) on the adoption of health behaviors, and Paluck et al. (2016) on reducing student conflict in schools.

Social Norms and Social Pressure

Other scholars (see, for example, Renström and Bäck, this volume) emphasize social incentives such as the role of injunctive norms regarding participation and/or the need for social recognition in explaining the role of others in encouraging participation. Injunctive norms are an individual's expectations about what others think they should do (Cialdini and Goldstein 2004: 597). A common example is the perception that voting is a civic duty (Downs 1957).

The field experimental literature on voter turnout consistently finds that individuals can be mobilized to vote by exerting social pressure in a context where a social norm around the duty to vote exists (Gerber et al. 2008; Mann 2010; Panagopoulos 2010; Sinclair et al. 2013), at least in low- and medium-salience elections (Green and York 2018: 513). In a well-known study, and one of the earlier voter mobilization experiments, Gerber et al. (2008), for instance, show how mailers promising to publicize individuals' turnout to their household or their neighbors after the election substantially increases turnout.

This finding has held true for charitable giving as well, with experimental studies showing that individuals are more likely to donate and to increase the amount given when others are watching (Della Vigna et al. 2012; Soetevent 2005). The same is true of political donations—Perez-Truglia and Cruces (2017) show that political donors in the US will donate more to political parties when informed about the higher-than-average amounts given by co-partisans in their neighborhood.

Few studies have examined whether approval from others encourages forms of participation for which participatory norms might be less strong. A rare exception is McClendon (2014), who shows how "the explicit promise of admiration from ingroup members" (idem: 281) increases participation in a demonstration supporting marriage equality for the LGBT community, over and above knowledge of the event. In partial contrast, Paler et al. (2018) find that individuals in Lebanon were 20 percentage points less likely to add their name to a petition calling for an end to sectarian politics when their name would be made public, and that this effect was strongest among those most concerned about social sanctioning. Overall, these studies suggest that the pressure of social expectations plays a key role in explaining participation decisions; however, whether it encourages or discourages participation depends on pre-existing norms regarding others' approval or disapproval (on this point see also Anoll 2018).

Social Belonging

Individuals might also be responsive to indirect mobilization as part of an effort to develop and maintain existing social connections (Foos and de Rooij 2019). This might be another reason why Bond et al. (2012) find Facebook messages to only be effective at increasing turnout when adding photos of close friends, and why mobilization works well in small, intimate networks (Foos and de Rooij 2017a). A recent study by Han (2016) illustrates how civic organizations can encourage activism among members by cultivating relationships. A series of three experimental studies shows that members of the National Association of Doctors were more likely to sign an online petition, recruit others for a cause, or attend a face-to-face meeting, when emails showed "responsiveness and openness towards their members, recogniz[ed] a shared past and implied future, and ask[ed] members to engage in reflection" (idem: 304).

There might be several reasons why social identity appeals are effective at encouraging participation, not least because they come with norms of behavior. Another factor might be, though, the sense of connectedness and belonging that an identity provides. Field experimental studies have shown how ethnic and national identity appeals can mobilize voters (Valenzuela and Michelson 2016), that partisan campaign messages are effective at turning out co-partisans but not opposition party supporters (Foos and de Rooij 2017b), that individuals adjust their consumer behavior based on information about firms' partisan allegiances (Panagopoulos et al. 2020), and that a nation-wide text message donation request by an NGO in Greece is less effective when referencing out-group (Roma) children in need rather than in-group children or children generally (Linos et al. 2020).

Pitfalls and Promising Avenues in the Experimental Study of Political Participation

Political participation experiments are moving beyond voter turnout. This a welcome development, proving that "feasibility" concerns need not dictate the type of activities or the causal factors studied. There has also been a trend towards testing more nuanced theoretical arguments. This not only assists researchers in identifying meaningful sources of variation and potentially useful interventions, it also aids the interpretation of results. A solid grounding in theory improves experimental designs, while atheoretical approaches risk limiting their usefulness.

Similarly, experiments, like any research design, benefit from care and attention during the initial design phase. Researchers should consider at the outset for whom and under what situation a given intervention is likely to work best (Mutz 2001). While variation in treatment effects can yield insights into how the treatment operates (Gerber and Green 2012), post-hoc subgroup analysis does not benefit from the logic of experimentation in the same way that groups formed by random assignment do. The examination of individual-level variation and heterogenous effects holds promise for future research, though, due to the increasing availability of large, diverse online samples. For instance, using a nationally representative survey experiment, Anoll (2018) shows that members of minority racial groups attribute more social value to individuals participating in political acts such as voting and rallying than members of the majority racial group do, suggesting the importance of group-specific social norms. Also using a survey experiment, Lyons et al. (2016) add to the discussion of the (de)mobilizing impact of disagreement by showing that the relationship between perceived disagreement in one's social network and political information-seeking changes depending on personality type. While these studies do not look at political participation (as we define it), their results shed light on individual motivations and add nuance to theories of political participation.

Experimental designs hold promise for collaboration, broadly speaking. Although collaboration can come with challenges (for extensive discussions, see John (2017) and Karlan and Appel (2016)), many recent experimental designs have benefitted from non-academic partnerships—or indeed, might not have been possible without them. Examples include participation in Get-Out-The-Vote campaigns, and partnerships with advocacy organizations to test the impact of different strategies on securing donations, sharing content on social media, or signing petitions. Partnering with an external organization has the potential to make administering experiments easier and cheaper, making experimental designs available to a wider array of researchers. Finally, experimenters partnering with organizations benefit from contextual knowledge about subject pools.

Information and spillover effects represent other opportunities for advancing political participation research. The link between information and political participation does not only flow in one direction. Braconnier et al. (2017) find that people who experienced a treatment aimed at improving voter registration rates became more knowledgeable about and interested in politics. Similarly, Olken (2010) finds that the use of plebiscites in the choice of development projects in Indonesia increased participants' knowledge of, and willingness to contribute to, such projects. The creation of good political habits can extend to voting as well, which has the potential to become habit-forming (Coppock and Green 2016; Gerber et al. 2003). Experiments that support the political participation of ordinary citizens may, therefore, contribute to positive downstream effects on political efficacy and future participation—effects that can be tested in future studies. Experimental designs can also examine how an intervention impacts subjects not initially targeted by the researcher (known as spillover effects). This opens the possibility to build on existing experimental designs by explicitly incorporating such opportunities.

Conclusion

Just under a decade ago, Dalton and Klingemann (2013) pointed to two promising areas of future research in the field of political behavior. First, they recommended moving away from viewing individuals as "autonomous political actors" towards seeing them as "exist[ing] in a social, economic, and political context that can shape their political behavior" (idem: 16). Second, they suggested tapping into the "tremendous potential" of experiments "to study causality" (idem: 17).

The contribution of experiments to the study of political participation has been increasingly substantial. Experimental designs enable a field that has traditionally relied on correlational empirical evidence to make stronger causal claims. This in turn has impacted what we know about individual-level determinants of political participation.

Field experimental research on voter turnout has provided important insights into factors impacting the decision to vote, for instance highlighting the role of others in turnout decisions. Such insights have had major ramifications for real-world campaigns, which have become less reliant on advice from "party wise men" (p. 3) and more data-driven (Issenberg 2012).

This revolution in the study of voter turnout suggests the potential for long-held beliefs about the key explanatory factors of other forms of political participation to be challenged. The long tradition of lab experiments confirms the important role of selective incentives, showing how (cheap) talk, social norms, and social trust enable collective action. Experimental studies conducted in other settings have built on these findings, showing how social influence plays a role in various political acts and different real-world contexts. Arguably, such experiments help refocus political participation as a social activity as prescribed by Dalton and Klingemann (2013), notwithstanding the enduring popularity of the resource model of participation (Brady et al. 1995).

In this chapter, we showed the increasing usage of experiments in the study of political participation and highlighted several studies with creative designs in terms of their setting, subject pool, intervention type, and outcome measurement. Looking at recent insights, we focused on one area of promising work, namely the role of social influence on decisions to participate. Although the role of others in motivating political action is now well established, more recent experimental work has started to shed light on the mechanisms at play. In this line of research, we are enthusiastic about the potential of large-scale online social network experiments, as well as experiments examining small, intimate social networks in furthering the field. Given the growth in experiments over the past twenty years, we look forward to seeing what kind of development the next twenty years will bring.

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CHAPTER 16

ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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Ethnography is inconvenient, both for researchers and for readers who do not like surprises. Ethnographic research inevitably challenges the ideal visions we treasure, the assumptions we make about what drives actors, the scholarly categories we rely on to make sense of our objects. Making trouble in all of these ways, ethnographic approaches make distinctive contributions to our understanding of political participation.

By ethnography, we mean research during which the researcher observes and to some degree participates in action *as the action is happening*. Ethnography, or participant-observation, and the sometimes closely associated interview research method, are different methods that produce different kinds of evidence, useful for addressing different though sometimes intersecting questions. Ethnographic research investigates action in the setting of the actor, in the time of the actor. Ethnographers pursue an iterative process of observation, preliminary analysis, and further observation (for example, Glaser and Strauss 1967; Aspers and Corte 2019) in order to capture accurately other people's *meanings* and ways of doing things (Lichterman 2021b). We want to discern how political participants make associations—rather than associate their speech and action immediately with our pre-given scholarly categories. Much of the insight as well as inconvenience of ethnographic research results from these research moves.

We do not claim to have reviewed ethnographic studies of political participation exhaustively; our examples are weighted heavily toward sociology. Other recent reviews have discussed more studies, in a wider variety of disciplines that host ethnographies of politics.[1] Pursuing a different purpose, this chapter explores the distinct insights and analytic goods that ethnographic studies of political participation make accessible more readily than other approaches. All approaches come with trade-offs. Ethnographic research on political participation or any other object precludes secure generalizations about large populations. The main benefits of ethnographic work come from what we can learn by watching and listening to people in their own settings over time.

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[1] See especially Baiocchi and Connor (2008); see also Benzecry and Baiocchi (2017). Baiocchi and Connor (2008) informatively review a history of ethnographic work on political actors and processes, looking back to the Chicago school and community studies traditions of the earlier and middle twentieth century.

What are ethnographers watching and listening for? Many ethnographers who study political participation come to the field sensitized by insights from classic and contemporary theoretical work. That includes insights on how to define political participation itself. We will start with our working definition and then discuss the theoretical groundings that influence a variety of contemporary ethnographic studies of the political. Then, our essay zeros in on three analytic aspects of political participation that ethnographic research is especially good at illuminating. Perhaps the overriding one, which we treat the most extensively, is the meanings and practices that constitute different kinds of political action. A related but separable, second aspect are the relations between political ideas and actors. A third is the ambiguous and shifting boundaries between what is and is not political or politicized. In each of these areas, ethnographic work improves understandings based on assumptions that commonly drive non-ethnographic or non-empirical writings.

A Working Definition of Political Participation for Ethnographers

Ethnographic observations of political actors or processes are hardly new in sociology or anthropology. As Baiocchi and Connor (2008) point out, though, a variety of intellectual trends in social science over the past several decades have made these studies more common and prominent. For Benzecry and Baiocchi (2017), they add up to a multidisciplinary field of study, a point on which we remain agnostic. Those same trends greatly diversified ethnographers' understanding of what counts as politics and participation, sending them increasingly far from state governance and institutionalized citizenship—the realm scholars traditionally associate with political participation. These trends include the revival of interest in civil society (Seligman 1992) and associational life (Putnam 2000), the "cultural turn" in US sociology, and finally, developments sometimes labeled "post-modernism." The latter generated a huge, sometimes ethnographically informed literature on the political meanings of media practices or acts of popular "resistance" from classrooms to internet chat rooms to football fields. Given these developments, we follow suit with a broad understanding of political participation.

Our working definition builds on a recent, massively researched overview of individual and collective political "voice" in the US (Schlozman et al. 2013): Political participation includes, first, the institutionalized realm of political voice traditionally associated with a democratic polity: voter, active political party member, donor, advocacy group member, or staff—whether they are engaged in a professionalized interest group or more informal, voluntary citizen association. Second, like Schlozman et al., we include the "creative participation" that actors engage in through the personal choices that they imbue with political significance—a boycott for example, and also what Schlozman et al. term "discursive participation," or engagement in talk about political issues in formal associations or informal friendship groups. This is the kind of participation that especially interests ethnographers (for example, Baiocchi 2006; Eliasoph 1998) influenced by Habermasian theory, reviewed shortly in this chapter. For them, open exchange of opinions and political learning represents participation in a "public sphere" of debate (Habermas 1974). This counts as a kind of political participation, because the public sphere sustains or impoverishes a society's political institutions over time even if it only indirectly affects any particular vote or legislative act. Third, our definition includes a much broader realm of activities that politicize or depoliticize (see Eliasoph and Lichterman 2010), by challenging or promoting a particular distribution of resources, or rights and entitlements, or by altering conditions for social recognition which connect with rights and resources. Ethnographers often focus on the second and third realm of political voice—especially protest, political organizing, alternative community building, and other kinds of social movement activity, or creative or discursive participation, much as other methods of course investigate these too. Ethnographic studies less often focus on institutionalized political acts, but can be illuminating when they do, as we will show.

INTELLECTUAL GROUNDINGS

As implied at the start, ethnographic works in particular, and qualitative sociological work in general, are often conceptually generative. They lead to new theories that not only "discover" new avenues of investigation, but also very often reveal complex associations between ideas, actions, and actors, extending or challenging what we learn from other methods. Implicitly if not explicitly, most investigations are preceded and accompanied by theoretical frameworks. Here we introduce the major frameworks we discern behind a wide range of ethnographies on political participation, each illustrated by empirical exemplars.

One classic source of theoretical insights for contemporary ethnographers of politics is the writing of Alexis de Tocqueville. His oft-quoted remarks in *Democracy in America* characterized US civic associations as cultivating their participants to broader political horizons, and a chastened sense of self-interest leavened by reciprocal commitments (1969[1835]: 509–527). This account of interaction in associations has sent a variety of ethnographers into the field to see whether and how this civic capacity-building, solidarity-building process really works. Studying a variety of sites for interaction in civil society, from local environmental groups to school volunteer projects to a casual clutch of barflies, Nina Eliasoph found (1998) that public group interaction often shrank rather than expanding participants' political expression. The political opinions they could express in private interviews or small protected circles evaporated in public group settings. The meaning of political speech itself varied from what Tocquevillians would assume. In his study of different environmentalist groups, Lichterman (1996) found not one horizon-broadening process but several different cultures of political commitment. One of these, counter to much social commentary of the time, depended not on deeply rooted, local social identities but on a deeply personalized sense of public virtue that made the individual, more than the group, the locus of political responsibility. Political commitment *meant* different things in these different cultures, leading to different strengths and weaknesses.

Jürgen Habermas' concept of the public sphere (1974), like Tocqueville's picture of civic associations, features the power of civic interaction, albeit from a different angle. A collective noun, the public sphere, encompasses the myriad sites in which members of society may discover, deliberate, or reformulate political opinion, however momentarily, sporadically, or enduringly. Parallel to their reception of Tocqueville, ethnographers have set out to explore how sites of the public sphere would unfold under particular conditions. Where—if anywhere—might we find critical–reflexive discourse about the political world, and what were its conditions of possibility? Eliasoph's (1998) study already mentioned addresses these questions, finding that local sites we might think of as more "public" or open in a conventional sense tended to elicit clichés and political avoidance, while the same participants might speak more critically in private. Baiocchi's (2003) research on municipal budgeting forums in Brazil discovers that sites of the public sphere might emerge suddenly even inside a governmentally sponsored meeting, an arena traditionally distinct from the public of civil society. Participants spontaneously collaborated to bust through the official agenda and discuss pressing, local grievances. Ethnographic studies of citizen participation in urban planning argue that planners' calls for citizen "participation" offer the Habermasian ideal only in a "funhouse mirror" (Doerr 2018). Implicit, as well as explicit, agenda-setting and other kinds of symbolic domination make these less like opportunities for free exchange of views and more like political corralling or a gauntlet of intimidation.

In a different vein of normative critique, Antonio Gramsci formulated a complex concept of "hegemony" in his writings. Capitalist hegemony is a cultural accomplishment, in which the worldviews and phraseology of the dominant class or class alliance become embedded in the guiding institutions of civil society (Gramsci 1971). Generated and circulated by traditional intellectuals and mass media, these ways of thinking and speaking become "common sense" for most socially subordinate people. Domination is never total; subordinate groups maintain a "contradictory consciousness" shot through with the intuitive "good sense" that the real experience of subordination produces.

Contemporary political sociologists, including ethnographers, discover how exploitative relations become simply "how things are," or common-sensical, for socially subordinate groups (for example, Gaventa 1980). Both the ruling class fractions and other, competing classes, in the Gramscian account, rely on intellectuals whose deft articulation work can help bring about a unified if temporary political "bloc." Ethnographer Lydia Bean (2013) uses an implicitly Gramscian imagination to show how religiously conservative Evangelicals become consistently conservative voters in the US. Their attraction to right-wing politics does not necessarily grow out of deeply held conservative "cultural values"; Canadian Evangelicals with similar values do not so readily vote conservative. Instead, US Evangelicals are seduced into associating their Christian commitments with a partisan stance through a process of "mapping" one onto the other (pp. 13–15) with the help of local ideologists of a sort—the occasional, avidly partisan church group member who polices implicit boundaries for other participants. Through interaction over time, Evangelicals become part of a right-wing political bloc, despite their open disavowal of the "dirty business" of politics (p. 3). Kertzer's (1980) study of church and Communist Party in an Italian town, while far removed in immediate subject-matter, similarly shows that strong political commitments are embedded in and animated by local social relationships, not simply beliefs or values in the abstract. These studies make Gramscian insights concrete by revealing the interactional patterns that stitch ideas to political actors.

Like Gramsci, Pierre Bourdieu was also concerned with the domination of subordinate groups in society and developed certain key notions of "field," "symbolic capital," "misrecognition" of "symbolic violence" and "habitus" (Bourdieu 1969: 89–91, 1977: 171–183). A field develops as actors bring their symbolic, economic, and cultural capital to compete over who will impose the dominant definitions and rules of the game in the field and devalue other actors' capital (Bourdieu 1969). An actor's capital generates a habitus—a set of internalized dispositions acquired in family life and crystallized through schooling, that tend to reproduce that actor's capital, thereby reproducing the hierarchical system that created it (Bourdieu 1977). Concepts of field or habitus have been quite influential in political sociology and, occasionally, the study of social movements (Fligstein and McAdam 2011). Many ethnographic studies (for example, Landriscina 2007; McQuarrie 2013) examine relations between advocacy organizations and other agencies and institutions in the larger political field. Bourdieu's insights feature as well in Javier Auyero's work on clientelism in Buenos Aires, which shows how habitus comes into the play when loyal supporters of brokers negotiate rational action and action motivated by their "clientelist habitus" in everyday life (Auyero 2017).

Michel Foucault theorized about a different aspect of domination from both Gramsci and Bourdieu. His theories bring us two interconnected concepts—governmentality and biopolitics, connected to his notion of knowledge-power (Foucault 1977: 189–91; Power 2011). By analyzing how sexuality became a discourse constituting knowledge-power, Foucault traces the development of modern "bio-politics"—the state's use of instruments and technologies to manage populations (Foucault 1990: 139). Individuals become subject to biopolitics through "disciplines" that surveil and direct individual behavior, not only in state institutions but in other arenas of professional expertise—medicine, psychiatry, or education, for example. The state's ability to impose these disciplines constitutes governmentality (Foucault 1991: 102–103), even apart from its power to pass laws or control subjects through violent means.

Foucauldian insights invite a wide search for sites and sources of political participation. Adriana Petryna (2004) shows in her work on post socialist Ukraine, that a new category of *biological* citizenship was created and sustained to assuage the suffering of a large number of people who were affected and continue to be affected by the Chernobyl disaster. Petryna's (2002) work reminds us that in Foucault's framework, while disciplines and technologies may emanate from and constitute a state, they are not simply one-way vectors of power and domination. They produce categories and subjectivities that may become bases for new claims, new power relations inside and outside the legislative state: biological citizenship provided power to people in difficult situations, giving them access to welfare services and a "specific knowledge, history and category" to claim a right. In our own, less Foucauldian terms, Petryna's ethnography shows that governing "ideas" (or knowledge-power) does not wholly colonize actors unidirectionally; the ethnographer catches the unanticipated ricochets that produce new bases for agency and new meanings that escape governmental planning.

A variety of intellectual groundings, then, have cultivated expanded understandings of what political participation is and where ethnographers may find it. In turn, ethnography engages, extends, and complicates major theoretical frameworks, by clarifying meanings, relations between actors and ideas, and shifting political boundaries. Now we look more closely at each of those three distinctive contributions.

MEANINGS AND PRACTICES: ZEROING IN ON WHAT PARTICIPATION MEANS AND HOW ACTORS DO IT

Empirical research sometimes can circumvent questions about the meaning of political participation by invoking the narrower definition that highlights citizen engagement in representative governance. The Schlozman et al. (2013: 10) compilation of evidence on individual citizen and interest group participation in the US is a magisterial example. While it identified "creative" and "discursive" participation, it confined its data to participation that influences or intends to influence government. In that case, the *meaning* of participation can be taken as obvious: "Participation" means influencing legislators. Normative political theory circumvents the meanings of participation by a different route. In Habermas' ideal (1974) of the public sphere mentioned before, participation means reasoned, open deliberation; in Fraser's notion of subaltern counterpublics (1989) it means a combination of protected deliberation and communal self-expression. Yet, actually existing civic associations, social movement groups or mediated forums may approximate these ideals or vary from them in many ways.

That is where ethnographic work comes in. What scholars call political participation can mean a great many things[2] and emerge in varied institutional and informal sites according to different dynamics of interaction. Revealing this is the biggest contribution of ethnographic research, for our purposes. These studies do not assume that competition for influence over government is unambiguously the meaning of participation, nor that participants take themselves as the deliberative citizens of liberal political theory, or the practical-minded community members of Tocqueville's perception. Sometimes, the subjects of ethnographic research do engage in political conversation in public spaces, somewhat as liberal or Tocquevillian theory would suppose: Katherine Cramer Walsh's (2004) ethnographic research finds ordinary midwestern US citizens talking politics around the table at local diners—homely, local sites of the public sphere. However, Walsh shows us that this kind of conversation is much more than an exercise in determining the best argument about an issue or the best candidate. She shows us people interpreting what they hear in light of what they perceive to be other speakers' social identities (2004). Opinions come socially located and do not just exist in the abstract. Speakers position themselves and their opinions in relation to social reference points. For example, conservative, rural Wisconsin residents make discursive participation into a politics of resentment in relation to what they perceive as wasteful and snooty urban elites (Cramer 2016).

In this way, ethnographic studies take interpretive initiative, revealing what informal political speech *itself* means to participants, apart from how it fits into pre-existing scholarly grids. When normative questions and ideals are analytic reference points for some of these studies, they are not final stops. For example, in Eliasoph's study (1998) of sites typically identified with the public sphere, participants in a grassroots environmental group took themselves to be apolitical "moms" who cared—hardly the image of virtuous, hardy citizens. Locals in the same region who frequented a lively dance bar treated themselves and each other as relentlessly irreverent, bad citizens—just to make clear that they were real, down-to-earth people and not up on anyone's high horse. The point of the study was to understand their world of political meanings, not to diagnose it.

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[2] We do not mean to present this as a new idea: Baiocchi and Connor (2008) among others make a similar claim.

Collective as well as individual acts of participation, contentious or non-contentious, can mean a variety of things to participants, apart from the issues participants pursue or the identities they affirm. In the past two decades, a growing line of research has investigated these meanings as different "styles" of interaction (Eliasoph and Lichterman 2003). Participants in political, and broader, civic life coordinate themselves in different, patterned ways, according to different, shared understandings of who "we" are in relation to the wider world, and what kinds of obligations we share while we are collaborating. Styles of interaction are fuzzy, cultural formats. We learn to recognize them roughly and enact them in more or less predictable ways as we spend time in a society; we do not make them up from scratch.

When we listen and watch closely, in the time and the settings of the researched, we see that styles of interaction do not simply match one-to-one with groups. Mische's (2008) studies of young Brazilian democracy advocates, for example, showed that the same activists might enact narrowly instrumental gamesmanship in some settings of a coalition, and personalized expressiveness in others. As an activist group is emerging, members may collaborate quite differently from how they do later on, after a successful or failed campaign alters their sense of who they are together and who matters most in their political world (Blee 2012). That is why it makes sense to discern the styles of different interactional scenes. Different scene styles inside a housing advocacy coalition, or a youth "empowerment" project, give the same participants not only different conversational limits but different capacities for political, collective action (Lichterman and Eliasoph 2014).

Ethnographic studies show that while style may be scene-specific in a large organization, some styles also have spread widely across many scenes, nationally and even internationally. US anti-nuclear protestors of the 1970s and 1980s (Epstein 1991), grassroots environmentalists of the 1990s (Lichterman 1996), and alternative globalization activists at the turn of the new millennium (Juris 2008), all shared a roughly similar style of social activism that prized individual voice, highly participatory, consensus decision-making, and leaderless initiative. For some political activists over the past half century, this "personalized politics" (Lichterman 1996) is simply *the* appropriate way to promote political change: any other is suspiciously hierarchical, perpetuating systems of domination that activists want to dismantle. A roughly similar style characterized post-1960s alternative community-building in Italy (Melucci 1989) and Green politics in Great Britain (Faucher-King 2005). These activists themselves experienced personalized politics as sometimes frustrating and ineffective for short-term change yet they kept pursuing it (Lichterman 1996), which only strengthens the point that the *meaning* of participation matters.

At the same time, styles have their limits: The scrappy, collectivistic "community-organizing" format familiar to many grassroots environmentalists (Lichterman 1996; Staggenborg 2020), schooling and public service advocates (Warren 2001), and church-based, urban improvement activists (Wood 2002) in the US turns on a distinctively American understanding of "community." Community organizing does not translate well in France, where the political–cultural mainstream cultivates suspicion toward people who speak on behalf of a local community rather than as citizens with universalistic claims, no matter how local the source of their grievances. "Community" in France is not necessarily a warm-fuzzy term as it is in the US, and "communitarian" is a term of derision (Talpin 2017).

As this last observation implies, the meanings of participation that ethnography reveals are much more than simply a human-interest topic. These meanings have *concrete consequences* for how advocates strategize and what they accomplish. For grassroots housing advocates in Los Angeles who collaborate as a "community of interest," for example, it is perfectly appropriate to forge short-term alliances across a variety of organizations—health advocacy groups, housing developers, religious congregations, even banks—that share a narrow interest in affordable housing, even if their missions otherwise differ. When the same advocates collaborate in a different style, as a "community of identity," they choose allies very selectively. They assume that the only truly meaningful, effective, political participation happens amongst others with whom one identifies closely as the "the community," in long-term alliances. One style is not better than the other. Each style visits dilemmas on its actors and each comes with trade-offs. That is part of why styles of participation are worth attending to ethnographically, in depth (Lichterman 2021a).

An ethnographic focus on shared meanings reveals the political implications of practices that may otherwise be overlooked as non-political. As Jennifer Candipan's (2019) study of a Latinx bike collective in LA shows, the simple process of riding a bicycle together can become, to bike riders, an act of political participation. This bike-riding collective not only allows Latinx women to voice their criticism of gentrification but also creates a safe space for community-building and politicization. The practice of bike riding by itself does not naturally carry political implications, but the meanings that participants associate with it, turns it into a wider process of political mobilization.

Through a similarly interpretive logic, ethnographers find actors conferring political meaning on a variety of subcultural practices. These include squatting (Mudu and Chattopadhya 2017: 1–32; Creasap 2012), graffiti writing (Waldner and Dobratz 2013) hip-hop performance (Isoke 2013; Gupta-Carlson 2010) and even skateboarding (Beal 1995). As Gupta-Carlson (2010) shows in her study of women hip-hop artists in Seattle, the practice of hip-hop is a means for challenging the gendered perceptions of hip-hop artists and engendering positive social change. Qualitative studies of "resistant" music subcultures such as hip-hop are not uncommon (e.g., Beighey and Unnithan 2006); sensitive ethnographic work shows how musical performance becomes political for the actors. Isoke's (2013) study of women rappers of African descent in Dubai, for example, shows the rappers putting political meaning together as they negotiate Islam, blackness, and heteropatriarchy simultaneously. Similarly, Caciagli (2019) studies the squatters' movement in Rome, and Dadusc (2019) studies a similar movement in Amsterdam to show the varying ways in which participants not only become politicized but also develop entirely new modes of practicing citizenship. Caciagli's (2019) study reveals how the act of squatting with others "educates" people into a mode of collective resistance, by showing how they develop feelings of mutual solidarity and jell into a collective political will. Dadusc (2019), on the other hand, sheds light on how migrants create a new form of inhabitance politics that rejects both the repressive practices associated with the criminalization of migration, and also a humanitarian form of governance, by continuing to occupy the spaces they squatted at. Brighenti's (2010) study of a crew of graffiti writers in northeast Italy also reveals to us the complexities associated with the politicization of graffiti. Different from the now common scholarly understanding of graffiti as a subcultural practice signifying resistance and illegality (Ferrell 1995), Brighenti's (2010) study suggests the politics of graffiti is territorial.

Ethnographers certainly do also illuminate conventionally understood political activity in legislative and other formalized arenas—the "first" realm of political voice we identified previously. Ethnographic "community studies," from the Lynds' *Middletown* (1929) to Kornblum's *Blue Collar Community* (1974) did this routinely as part of their anatomy of a locale.[3] Contemporary ethnographic studies of political participation tend to have less panoramic objectives. A fine exception, though, is Pacewicz's ethnographic portrait (2015, 2016) of neoliberal politics in the US rustbelt. Globalized capital and vanishing jobs induce small-city leaders to favor "partnerships" between unions and distant corporate powers, disempowering an older style of partisan, political competition.

The growth of conservative populism and authoritarianism in the 2010s prompted new ethnographic sorties into electoral politics. A masterful recent example is Garrido's ethnographic work (2017) on the attractions that a populist, Philippine presidential candidate held for poor residents of Manila. Widely reviled by middle-class Manilans, candidate Joseph Estrada offered relatively little in the way of material favors to his low-income constituency but, Garrido discovers, the candidate offered them a consistently authentic performance: he gave them a precious sense of dignity, receiving in return an intense devotion that elevated him to a charismatic status. In the US, Skocpol and Williamson (2012) included ethnographic research in their anatomy of the conservative "Tea Party," a partly grassroots and partly donor-funded conservative movement that made anger the centerpiece of its anti-government, pro-market—and some would add, white nativist—bid to re-make the Republican party. The ethnographic work in the study steers readers away from simpler notions that grassroots Tea Party activists were simply racist ideologues or ideologically motivated schemers of any kind. Rather, their anti-political stance and general sense that they had "lost our country" made them a ripe constituency for much more strategic, ideologically invested political operatives. Both of these studies communicate a big, if subtle, value of ethnographic inquiry: We discover the patterns through which ideas and political actors come together in everyday action, which is the topic we turn to next.

Relations between Political Ideas and Actors

Survey research helpfully assesses political attitudes and opinions. Countless studies go on to determine correlations between these and survey respondents' social backgrounds. By following sequences of action and interpretation and more action, as actors themselves experience those sequences (Blee 2012; Glaeser 2011), ethnographers illuminate *how* political actors relate to their political ideas in different settings and organize collective action around those ideas. As Antonio Gramsci (1971) and Pierre Bourdieu (1984) powerfully observed, holding an opinion is itself a socially situated accomplishment, not a simple psychological fact. People at different social locations, in different settings, relate with vastly more, or less, articulacy and self-confidence to their opinions and to the very act of claiming an opinion. Highly schooled environmental activists in the 1990s talked elaborately about the need for new "post-industrial values" and cultural change in order to save the planet. They assumed that a proper opinion is verbally elaborate and ideological. Environmentalists with less schooling but the same basic commitments to sustainable development articulated themselves more in terms of community and family health (Lichterman 1996). Ethnographies of political participation force us beyond the default assumption engendered by survey research that the *meaning* of holding a political opinion is obvious and uniform in a population, and that political opinions in people's heads drive their decisions and actions across the varied settings of life. Some ethnographic work we review in this section also troubles the tendency to assume that social location strictly determines political ideas.

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[3] See the helpful review of the community studies tradition in Baiocchi and Connor (2008).

Sometimes a seemingly political opinion or even a vote for a candidate is not "political" in the eyes of the actor. This is a meaningful, consequential reality that we will not pick up from ordinary survey studies. Consider, for example, the puzzle that a strong majority of US Evangelical Protestants voted for presidential candidate Donald Trump in 2016 and 2020 and told survey pollsters throughout Trump's term in office that they approved of his performance (Lipka and Smith 2020). One would think that Evangelicals, a theologically and often socially conservative religious grouping, touted as "values voters" by political entrepreneurs, would shun the famously adulterous, duplicitous, seemingly compassionless Trump. Ethnographic research like Lydia Bean's mentioned previously shows that being an Evangelical Protestant involves more than theological ideas; to become evangelical is to cultivate a distinct social identity. And for many US evangelical laypeople, "people like us" think of politics and political institutions as distractions. They understand "Christ-like" interpersonal relationships as more *real* than political institutions (Lichterman 2005, 2008; Bean 2013). A vote is not necessarily a "political" choice but rather an affirmation of who Christ-following "people like us" think is on "our" side and believes what we believe. Candidate and President Trump may have troubled some of the theological beliefs that surveys tap, but he managed to align himself with more visceral and less scripted ideas about who are "people like us" and who are a threatening, victimizing "them."

Another way that ethnographic research complicates common-sense ideas about "holding an opinion" is by showing that the same people may affirm quite different political opinions, knowledge, or ideologies depending on the setting. Members of Eliasoph's (1998) suburban volunteer groups shunned political topics in public settings, yet in private interviews some worried over pollution and perilous accidents at a military base nearby. Mische's (2008) youth activists mentioned previously changed their stance depending on the setting. In Lichterman's (1999) ethnographic study of sexual identity politics in an east coast US city, activists identified themselves as "queer," eschewing static sexual categories of "gay" or "straight," in their small, grassroots protest group. They readily became "gay," however, and acceded to a liberal gay interest group politics of rights and opportunities when working in an electoral campaign coalition with other political groups.

Scenarios such as these also challenge a prominent, scholarly way of thinking about relations between political ideas and actors. Over the past 35 years, the social movements research field has produced many studies conceiving that relationship in terms of strategic "framing." In this line of research, a frame typically is a package of messages that actors hope will resonate with a targeted audience (Snow and Benford 1988; Williams and Benford

2000:129).[4] Strategic social movement entrepreneurs craft frames more or less intentionally. Interestingly, the notion of social movement framing emerged from ethnographic research. Progenitors of the approach combined its original, interactionist presuppositions (Snow et al. 1986: 467; Snow 2008; Snow et al. 2014) with a strategic actor model familiar in many social movement studies. In short, "instrumentalist" or "agentic" advocates (Snow 2004: 385; Snow et al. 2014) craft frames that appeal to constituencies, making them more likely to join or support the cause. In this view, participants in social movements carry around ideas, engineered by strategic leaders, which "resonate" with them (Snow and Benford 1988) and make them into adherents of a movement.

Framing studies tend to underplay or ignore the possibility that participants may maintain different relations to what, on paper, are the same ideas, or that they may affirm different ideas in different settings. Ethnography discovers that even the act of framing itself *means* something. Not all social activists interpret the act the way many researchers do. Some of Lichterman's (2021a) Los Angeles housing advocates derided concerted efforts by leaders of a housing coalition to "frame" a municipal affordable housing mandate as a reasonable, widely appealing solution to a crisis of unaffordable housing. Preferring a different style of participation to the one that was dominant in the coalition, they considered framing for broad appeal as too polite, "middle-class," and inauthentic.

While ethnographic work challenges notions of a strategic actor who wields symbols like pliable media, it also steers us away from any assumption that political claims are shaped by a uniform cultural determinism. Political actors do craft claims inside a discursive field that sets parameters on what is legitimate for any competitor in the field to say (Spillman 1995; Zubrzycki 2001). Yet a discursive field is not simply a cultural given. Lichterman and Dasgupta's ethnographic study of claims-making about housing (2020) shows us how a discursive field generates in interaction, squeezing some rhetorical appeals out. Discourses of opportunity and quality of life became dominant in the field of housing advocacy in Los Angeles, while the actors themselves marginalized or silenced claims that appealed to a need for social-structural transformation, or compassion, when these emerged in public debate.

Ethnographic research gives us special purchase on a third analytic issue in understanding political participation. We learn that the lines between "politics" or political action and other kinds of action—professional social service, for example—are not always as stable, unambiguous, or institutionalized as sectoral theories of society lead us to assume.

MESSY BOUNDARIES OF THE POLITICAL

As some of the studies in this chapter have already shown, a critical contribution of ethnographic work is its ability to challenge conventional assumptions about static boundaries between political and non-political sites. A number of these studies find blurry boundaries at the intersection of nonprofit social service or advocacy organizations and governmental administration; we discuss a few here.

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[4] Though derived from Erving Goffman's writings, the idea of frame here, now very widespread, differs from Goffman's understanding of frame as a set of assumptions regarding what the act of speaking together is for, or, "what we are doing by speaking." See Goffman, Erving. [1974] 1986. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.

A good example is Stuart's work with the policing of homelessness in Los Angeles (Stuart 2013). The ethnographer follows police practices in two central city neighborhoods. One is Skid Row, a now-gentrifying, historically rundown quarter where many of the city's unhoused people have lived, very different from the adjacent, financial business core of Downtown Los Angeles. Stuart's evidence reveals that police seek to perform a rehabilitative job and reconstruct the homeless population in Skid Row, not as a "rabble" that needs to be "quarantined" and "excluded," but rather as a population that needs to unlearn "bad habits" born of individual flaws. The radically different notions of policing, exclusionary versus rehabilitative, that co-exist in two adjacent, center-city localities capture two different modes of governance. Stuart argues the two governing strategies reflect the differential siting of neighborhood organizations—specifically, homeless shelters. Conventionally, we do not view homeless shelters as political agents, but the study points out that the police in Skid Row develop a rehabilitative strategy that rests on the presence of shelters such as the Union Rescue Mission. A homeless shelter becomes an active moderator of a new form of governance, equipping the police with ideological constructs that facilitate policing work.

Landriscina's (2007) study, also on the managing of homelessness, shows again that ostensibly non-political organizations do a kind of political work at least covertly. This study of Project H.O.M.E., an advocacy organization for unhoused people in Philadelphia, sheds light on how an institutionalized advocacy organization can remain autonomous of the state despite being dependent on public-sector funding. When Downtown business leaders begin pressuring authorities for more stringent laws to manage homeless populations, Project H.O.M.E. is able to disrupt the efforts, not by engaging in direct conflict, but rather through effective management of the policy-making process. Staff are able to derail the process without entering into conflict. As Landriscina (2007) explains, a casual outsider might find the organization to be lackadaisical toward, or even complicit in, this threat to homeless people. Months of fieldwork show the author how mundane practices and institutionalized resources are effectively utilized in a subtle and symbolic claims-making process that all but ensures derailment of the legislation drive. The ethnographic scenarios not only flesh out something that Stuart (2013) hints at, but also show the complexity of participation in actions that can be conventionally understood as political—the demand for new legislation.

Sometimes the ambiguous and shifting boundaries result from governmental funding or outsourcing of social service. Taking us inside a domestic violence shelter geared to Indian immigrant women in Chicago, Rudrappa (2004) finds that the initially politicized, feminist mission of the organization was unable to endure, as governmental funding depended on professionalized service routines. Sometimes wistfully, staff treated women as clients, not subjects of empowerment, making themselves accountable to funding authorities and professional norms, not the women's movement. A feminist project, which indeed had attracted the author, became a service agency.

Informal social spaces as well as organizational sites host messy boundaries. Navaro-Yashin's (2006) study of politics in the public life of Turkey argues that one cannot limit the political to institutions or places associated with conventional political activity. The author (2006) locates the political at multiple venues—cafés, streets, shops—by signifying not the spatiality but the temporality of political activity. In one chapter he looks at the myriad responses that the coming of the Welfare Islamist party generates in what he terms as the "secularist" populace (Navaro-Yashin, 2006: 19–43). He not only shows how political participation takes place in non-conventional sites, but also is able to illustrate the use of humor and rumors to vilify the Islamist opposition—thereby expanding the "how" of political participation along with the "where" of it.

Conclusion: Beyond the "isms" of the Time

Ethnographic studies have done much to inform us on political trends that scholars and many citizens alike consider troubling. Since the 1990s, such work has deepened our understanding of political apathy and withdrawal (Eliasoph 1998; Bennett et al. 2013), and the political consequences of individualism (Lichterman 1996), to name just two examples. Bringing actors' own meanings into view, ethnographic inquiry forces us to encounter lived, political realities that terms like "individualism" or "populism" grasp only very loosely at best.

Currently, the worldwide upsurge of nativist and white supremacist movements and voting blocs calls for a renewed attention to the meanings of participation, the relations between actors and ideas, and the continual smudging and redrawing of boundaries between politics, social service, and religious devotion. As Garrido's (2017) research on electoral politics in the Philippines implies, we may be surprised at how far the everyday realities of political participation depart from the presuppositions of normative political theory. Which everyday meanings and relationships enable members to expand rather than shrink and ossify the boundaries of political community? Which are enabling citizens to pursue cultural exclusion and affirm racial hierarchy in formally liberal democracies across the globe? Whether or not we think political ethnography has an ultimately critical mission, ethnographic studies of participation inform us on the conditions of possibility for cultivating human decency and sustaining society itself across divides sometimes subtle, sometimes terrifying.

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CHAPTER 17

LIFE HISTORIES INTERVIEWS FOR THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

LORENZO BOSI

Life history interviews have been conducted in a wide range of social science disciplines (i.e. anthropology, criminology, folkloristic studies, education, ethnology, feminist research, geography, linguistics, psychology, political science and sociology) and with remarkable variation.[1] Some researchers are predominantly interested in using life history interviews in order to investigate how stories are told (life story) (Portelli 1991; Slim and Thompson 1993); what interests us here, instead, is how the story subjective reconstruction relates to what has happened in the respondent's life trajectory and, specifically, on activists' dynamic trajectories.

Rather than relying on static approaches to data collection, such as large-scale sample surveys, which focus on structural factors in an a-temporal moment, by disconnecting activists from their life history and context, and representing them as static actors, life history interviews provide an impressive methodological tool allowing to focus on the permanent dialectic process between agency and structure; to articulate micro-, meso- and macro-levels of analysis in order to contextualize activists' dynamic trajectories; to place political participation diachronically, as a long-lasting social activity articulated through the transformation of different phases of a life trajectory (dispositions, primary and secondary socialization, partnering and marriage, parenthood, working, retirement, and so on); and forms of engagement (mobilization, transfer, radicalization, institutionalization, abeyance, disengagement, and so on).

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[1] Life history interviewing is not the only method used for biographical research that seeks to understand the unfolding lives of individuals within their social context (Denzin 1989). There exist other biographical approaches, such as: oral histories, personal narratives, autobiographies, autoethnography, life narratives and interpretative biography. At the same time, many types of interviews, that focus on the life trajectories of individuals vary according to the author and the theoretical tradition: narrative interviews, biographical interviews, retrospective interviews, in-depth interviews, and so on. While it is not the aim of this chapter to describe different types of biographical methods and interviews (Tierney and Lanford 2019), we should be aware of the fact that this richness has often produced "a certain terminological confusion in the field" of life history research and biographical interviews (Bertaux 1981: 7).

Although the origins of life history interviews can be traced back to the early stages of the twentieth century, and in particular to the Chicago School of sociological research of the inter-war years, over the last decades there has been a resurgence of this methodology in the social sciences. One of the main reasons behind this renewed interest is the growing importance of change, diversity, and uncertainty within the social sciences, which has opened possibilities for new accounts of individual agency (Bertaux 1981). Life history interviews provide an opportunity for activists to present and make sense of their lives as active agents willing to change society and not be entirely socially determined. Therefore, they offer an "entry point" into explaining how structures shape activists' lives and vice versa. As C. Wright Mills observes, "[N]either the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both" (1959: 3). Life history interviews therefore take agency, subjectivity, and reflexivity seriously, introducing "a dynamic perspective in the analysis. They capture past experiences, present feelings, and future hopes and projects of the interviewees" (Passy and Giugni 2000: 127).

Individual lives happen in nested contexts, so that their decisions are never taken in isolation, but are influenced by the contexts in which they are embedded. While life history interviews focus on the activist, they can be used to link personal life experiences (micro-level) to organizational change (meso-level) and/or to broader historical socio-political circumstances (macro-level) over time. Hence, life history interviews are never fully individual, as subjective stories highlight shared experiences of political participation in context. They have the potential to link micro-, meso- and macro-processes, allowing activists to discuss not only their lives, but also collective structures and socio-political contexts that they inhabit and experience, given as Bosi and Della Porta (2012) have written that "[I]t is their complex, repeated interactions that especially need to be studied in detail, since each compounds and complicates the others" (361). Life history interviews focus on how activists derive meaning from and act in the light of changing contexts, as for example a change of regime (Accornero 2019); a specific transformative event (Bosi 2012); the radicalization process of a social movement group (Della Porta 1995); or its process of institutionalization (Bosi 2019). They counter the lack of context that characterizes much of the existing scholarly work on political participation, instead reconstructing the open-ended nature of activists' lives within specific contexts.

Refusing "snapshot" investigations of political participation, life history interviewing pertains to the processual character of activists' lives, thus placing a strong emphasis on temporal properties, such as turning points, transitions, and trajectories (Becker 1970). This time-sensitivity starts from the premise that activists' lives gradually change over time, being both shaped by the life history in the changing context and shaping it. Individuals are not born activists, but they might mobilize, and once they become activists they shift back and forth between different forms of engagement, most of the time disengaging from political participation at some stage in their lives. Activists' lives are, in fact, considered to be in continuous transformation in their life course, in which transformation corresponds to a change in a state of political participation, such as from being not politically affiliated to being involved in a political organization (mobilization process); from being involved in non-violent forms of political participation to shifting to violent forms of political participation (radicalization process); from being involved in one political organization to being engaged in another one (transfer process); from being engaged in a political organization to disengaging from it, but not from political participation as a whole (abeyance process); from being active in informal groups to being involved in the terrain of formal politics (institutionalization process); from being involved in a political organization to exiting political participation (disengagement process); and so on. Life history interviews do not reduce political participation to one initial act of mobilization, but conceive it as a long-lasting social activity, which shifts across time between different forms of political engagement, in the course of an individual's full life history. As Linden and Klandermans (2007: 185) suggest, "[L]ife-history interviews are like travels through time as the interviewee is asked to go back in the past." Hence, life history interviews investigate political participation as a diachronic process of "what follows what" in the activists' lives, tracing the origins of their mobilization, how they may have shifted to a different form of participation, and whether they have disengaged from political participation. Life history interviews allow us to reconstruct the steps of a sequence and how these steps connect to each other, giving life to a path and thus explaining an activist's dynamic trajectory. They enable an understanding of activists' dynamic trajectories, which are temporally contextualized.

In this chapter I first introduce the epistemological assumptions for the use of life history interviews. Following this, I examine how they have been used to investigate political participation. Furthermore, I present what consists in running life history interviews with political participants, by addressing their methodological precepts. I conclude by highlighting possible ways forward for the study of political participation by adopting life history interviews.

Epistemological Assumptions for the Use of Life History Interviews

Individual lives are not static episodes that take place in a moment in time and out of context: they are dynamic trajectories that unfold and interweave with one another over time, alongside other processes taking place in time and space. If individual lives are in continuous dynamic transformation rather than merely existing in a steady state out of context, then we need methodological tools of investigation to study and explain how they evolve, develop, change, and grow across time through human interactions in context.

Life history interviews offer a powerful holistic instrument to retrospectively reconstruct—through oral testimonies and with the help of a researcher—the dynamic trajectories of individuals' lives in context, focusing on how they have arrived at the present moment, on transformations in life trajectories, and on the meaning of the trajectory as it has unfolded over time. In other words, life history interviewing is an excellent methodological tool to gather rich qualitative data on a long period of a person's life, or even on their entire life (from childhood to the present), and from the perspective of the people under examination. As Howard Becker (1970: 64) writes, "[T]o understand why someone behaves as he does you must understand how it looked to him, what he thought he had to contend with, what alternatives he saw open to him." However, this qualitative methodological tool should not be seen as promoting determinism and linearity in an individual's life course (Bourdieu 1986); rather, it shows how lives are fragmented in unanticipated and heterogeneous ways, as both continuity and change are the driving forces of individual lives. Life trajectories are, in fact, temporal constructs that convey a sense of flux and change, and the aim of life history interviews is, then, to capture "reality in flight" (Pettigrew 1997). In doing so, they contextualize the individual's dynamic trajectories.

The epistemology of life history interviews is social–constructionist and symbolic—interpretative rather than positivist in nature, as their aim is to obtain not facts or laws but interpretations, and because they do not aim at generalizing individual trajectories or establishing fixed causality of how certain events can impact individuals, but see individual behaviors as a lifelong process. Thus, the focus is not on whether an outcome occurred during the respondent's life, but rather on how this has happened, how the context has shaped this transformation, and how the latter has been filtered into the everyday life of the respondents. This means that events, such as becoming a mother, are not treated in isolation; if we want to understand how women's career trajectories are affected by maternity in a particular epoch, country, or job context, these events must be treated as elements in the life course of an individual in context. This methodological tool seeks to obtain rich details and generate first-hand accounts of a sequence of steps from the perspective of an insider, by asking how things have developed in the respondent's unfolding life history over time. This allows researchers to investigate how people make sense, in a subjective way, of their life in context.

The information produced through life history interviews challenges researchers to explain a respondent's current attitudes and behavior, and how these may have been induced by happenings/events that occurred at another time. The intention of life history interviews is, then, to understand how the patterns of different life trajectories can be related to their context. Consequently, researchers who use this method become "historians of social life" (Denzin 1989), capable of making social sciences and history interact with one another.

Life History Interviews and the Study of Activists' Dynamic Trajectories

Life history interviews can generate important insights into the study of political participation, as they are interested in how activists' dynamic trajectories transform across time in context. Yet, scholars working on political participation rarely employ this methodology, apart from those who study unconventional forms of participation, in particular social movements, armed groups, alternative forms of participation by young people, and processes of politicization among women and minority groups.[2] With regard to this methodological tool, Donatella della Porta (2014: 267–268) has written the following "[L]ife histories are privileged by those who share few assumptions […] the belief that history is made up of ordinary people […] the conviction that ordinary people have a sophisticated understanding of the world around them, and that this understanding motivates their actions." Next, she observes that "the attention is also fixed on the flow of time, and especially on the relation between past and present." Finally, she states that "life history places the individual in a wider space, where lives are lived within social networks [. . .] The attention is then firmly focused on interaction between private and public history." In particular, life history interviews can help to counter the tendency of focusing on the more prominent figures and giving, instead, visibility to grassroots participants, who would, otherwise, remain absent from most documentary sources, making their stories known by bringing their agency to center stage.

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[2] For previous discussions of this method, regarding social movement research, specifically, see Della Porta (1992, 2014); Blee and Taylor (2002); Corrigall-Brown and Ho (2013); Fillieule (2019); Klandermans (2020).

If large-scale surveys have been applied to compare snapshots of political participants with those who do not participate in political life, and with the national population more generally, life history interviews, drawing together personal accounts and contexts, have been applied to see political participation as a lifelong process. Rather than reducing every single phase of engagement to a precondition, life history interviews are helpful to see how activists' dynamic trajectories unfold via the lived experience of activism in context. The specific phase of engagement or type of political participation is connected to context, as organizations and political opportunities/threats entail experiences that shape individuals' perceptions and frames of interpretation. The main motivation for their use is that they enable the reconstruction of the dynamic trajectories that contingently evolve, develop, change, and grow across time through human interactions in context, of activists up to their mobilization—considered as steps in personal trajectories—and to explain the reasoning behind their participation in a social movement group/organization (McAdam 1986; Blee 1993, 2002; Passy 1998; Klandermans and Mayer 2006; Munson 2008 Kornetis 2013), in a political party (Goowin 2010), or in armed groups (Della Porta 1990, 1995; Zwerman 1992; Moyano 1995; Parkinson 2013). In other cases, these interviews have been used to study the fluctuation in activist commitment over a lifetime, including disengagement processes (Passy and Giugni 2000; Bryan and Simi 2015; Abiyaghi and Younes 2018; Accornero 2019; Latif et al. 2019; Serrat and Villar 2020), and to examine how participants evaluate and make sense of their experiences as political participants (Blee 2016; Fillieule and Neveu 2019; Bosi 2019; Carlsen et al. 2020). Life histories have also been used to investigate the influence of primary and secondary socializations on political behavior among young people (Braungart and Braungart 1994; Rosen 2019; Bosi, Lavizzari, and Voli 2021; Lukuslu and Walther 20201); on politicization processes among women (Gluck and Patai 1991; Searle-Chatterjee 1999; Roth 2000, 2003); on the construction of collective and individual identities of marginalized groups, such as ethnic, racial, and class minorities that have progressively started to politicize their claims and forms of political participation (Robnett 1996; Auyero 2003; Perez 2018); and on life stories of participants in revolutionary situations (Schwarz 2019). More recently, this methodological tool has been used, in particular, to identify variation in processes of mobilization, persistence, or disengagement (Viterna 2006, 2013; Linden and Klandermans 2007; Corrigal-Brown 2012; Bosi 2012, 2019; Bosi and Della Porta 2012; Ng 2015; Sodestrom 2016). Life history interviews have often been used to study single case studies of political participation. However, only in a few cases have life history interviews been employed to study political participants in different countries (Klandermans and Mayer 2006), in different cities (Fillieule et al. 2018), and in different types of political organizations (Corrigall-Brown 2012; Bosi, Lavizzari, and Voli 2021).

In previous works on former armed activists of the Provisional IRA (Bosi 2012, 2016a, 2016b, 2019; Bosi and Della Porta 2012; Bosi and O'Dochartaigh 2018), using subjective accounts of past experiences that were produced with the help of 25 life history interviews, I was able to explore the former activists' perceptions of their sense of agency during their mobilization into an armed group (Bosi 2012; Bosi and Della Porta 2012; Bosi and O'Dochartaigh 2018), their commitment to the armed group (Bosi 2016a), their political resistance while in prison (Bosi 2016a), and their post-armed activism lives in the aftermath of the armed conflict (Bosi 2016b, 2019). Among the former armed activists of the Provisional IRA whom I have interviewed, "There were those who followed the long-term republican tradition of their families, those who thought that armed struggle was the only approach capable of bringing about change in Northern Ireland, and those who did not see another 'way out' and felt 'obliged' to endorse an armed campaign in order to defend their own community from Loyalist violence and the authorities' repression" (Bosi 2019: 208). However, as my work has shown "despite having been mobilized into the PIRA through different paths of mobilization (Bosi 2012), [they] have pursued their disengagement processes in the same arena and have shown at the time of the interview similar post-armed activist lives" (Bosi 2019: 217–218), confirming in this case that activists' trajectories are not linear, but very much shaped from context at the meso- and macro-levels. Additionally, I have examined their understanding of structural influences on their personal involvement, including major changes in the political context of the late 1960s and early 1970s (Bosi and O'Dochartaigh 2018), such as heavy state repression and increasing communal violence (Bosi 2012; Bosi and Della Porta 2012); their experience in two total institutions—the armed group and prison—for more than thirty years (Bosi 2016a); and their post-activist lives being shaped by state counter-terrorism policies and reintegration programmes (Bosi 2019). For example, through the life history interviews of former armed activists I have shown with a colleague (Bosi and O'Dochartaigh 2018) how "in the face of major changes in the political context . . . the PIRA's armed struggle offered what many young northern nationalists thought they needed at this stage [by the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s], the vehicle through which to achieve a political voice in a society in conflict" (37). Furthermore, through the accounts of former armed activists I was able to show "how the long-term impact of armed militantism was mediated by the British state's strategies of counter-insurgency and provision of social services in the case of the PIRA in Northern Ireland" (Bosi 2019: 218), fully acknowledging the structure–agency dynamics shaping activists' dynamic trajectories and in particular their post-armed activism lives.

Doing Life History Interviews with Political Participants

There are no easy techniques or rules for conducting life history interviews with political participants. However, certain steps can be taken before, during, and after the interviews that will improve the efficiency of this methodological tool. A first step is undoubtedly that of obtaining knowledge of the empirical case/s under investigation as well as of the analytical approaches that can possibly explain this/these case/s. The selection of the respondents, the establishment of a culturally acceptable attitude on behalf of the interviewer, and the preparation of questions to ask are initially based on prior knowledge of the case/s study.

Furthermore, comparable existing studies can corroborate or challenge the researcher's findings during fieldwork.

Since this methodological tool does not aim to build a representative sample of the activists under examination, or of a certain population (of a country, region, or movement), as happens with surveys, respondents are not randomly or systematically selected. Life history interviews are typically adopted in small-scale investigations, where (former) activists are based on an a priori research design, theoretical sampling, or "snowball" sampling, in order to guarantee a spectrum of respondents that gives weight to political participants' lived experiences and their subjective understandings. The goal of the sampling is to assure a broad range of political participants, who represent all types of participants that are meaningful for the case/s under examination. For example, in a research project investigating individual trajectories of young activists in Europe, a multistage and multilevel sampling design was produced, which first sampled the urban context (macro-level), then the organizations/groups (meso-level), and finally a variety of individuals in terms of sociographic backgrounds (micro-level), for a total of 252 respondents (28 for each country included in the project) (EURYKA D6.2 2020; Bosi, Lavizzari, and Voli 2021). However, to guarantee a spectrum of respondents that gives weight to political participants is not always possible, for different reasons. What is important is that researchers acknowledge such difficulties in their publications and make explicit which type of activists they were able to interview and which they were not during the fieldwork. In my work on former Provisional IRA armed activists, I wanted to also interview respondents from South Armagh, who could possibly provide different life trajectories in comparison with those who came from Belfast and Derry whom I had managed to interview. My gatekeepers within the Irish republican movement, however, informed me that this further sample of respondents was not recommended at that stage for security reasons. I then decided to avoid taking any risk. In my publications I have fully acknowledged this absence in my sample of respondents (Bosi 2012, 2016a). Normally, when further respondents produce thinning results, a saturation point has been reached where there is no need to add additional respondents. Political participation scholars who have used this methodological tool seem to agree that, although they expected certain difficulties to discourage participants from being interviewed, they were, instead, quite supportive (Blee 2003), given that most activists wished to be taken seriously and to be listened to. Activists view life history interviews as an opportunity to convey, at a proper time and in a proper space, their political personal messages outside their circumscribed circle of activism. Furthermore, they offer activists the opportunity to look back on their lives from an unusual angle, inviting them to rethink and reflect on their life as a trajectory, where the legacy of the past shapes the ways in which they make choices and develop actions.

As with any type of interview, activists participating in life history interviews should have a clear understanding of their rights with regard to the interview and how it may be used: access restrictions, the possible use of a tape recorder, anticipated forms of dissemination, whether or not respondents want their anonymity to be maintained, and what copyright procedures will be followed.[3] A brief explanation of the project and of the way the life history interview will be used is equally fundamental to help to build trust as well as a comfortable atmosphere for the respondent, who is usually invited to propose a preferred time and a place. It is important that the researcher maintains a balance of formality and informality throughout the process of interacting with the respondent so as to show respect for the latter and gender sensitivity, in particular if respondents come from a marginalized or minority group.

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[3] For a previous work on the ethics for running oral histories with activists, see Blee (1993).

Researchers rely on a semi-structured interview protocol (interview guideline) that contains a set of very open topics and questions. These are usually structured in such a way that they may favor a chronological reconstruction of the participant's life history, thus giving the conversation a flow and direction. Researchers decide how far back in time they wish to go. The interview guide is not rigid and grants the respondent some flexibility, as the researcher is aiming to obtain the activist's own interpretation of their life trajectories. It is a tool that can give the activist a voice after all. The best life history interviews are those with the smallest number of questions. Thus, the interview guideline is used differently in every interview, depending especially on the respondent. In some cases, respondents are keen on speaking and the guideline serves more as a checklist to ensure that all topics are discussed; in other cases, it serves to encourage the respondents who are reluctant to take the lead in the interview and narrate their life histories. The activists' age, level of politicization and previous experience in recalling their lives as activists determines the extent to which the researcher needs to use the interview protocol. I personally had to rely heavily on the guideline while interviewing young Muslims in Italy with a very low level of politicization (Bosi and Della Porta 2010). Probably, they were perceiving the project and my interest as a scholar in their community as yet another way of targeting their community. Once I was switching off the tape recorder and finishing the formal interview then they were willing informally to take the lead, not perceiving our conversation any more threatening than the questioning that they experience daily at school or in the streets. This was not the case, for example, with former armed militants in their sixties and seventies, who had a high level of politicization, having been involved in an armed group for more than thirty years, which had trained them to take the stage in the conversations (Bosi 2016a). Despite the type of (former) activists we met in the interview process, what characterizes this method is the imbalance of power between the researcher and the respondents, something that would always merit some reflexivity on how the researcher positions himself/herself in relation to the activists investigated, as the power differentials might make it difficult to establish rapport (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Given that, when it manifests itself, the imbalance of power is most of the time very difficult to solve. Often, I have softened this problem by making the activists believe that I know little or nothing about them and the context in which they engage or have engaged. This provides them with a position of power in terms of the topic of the interview and it works extremely well in connection with this methodological tool since the aim is to collect subjective readings of their lives and not objective facts. Interview questions should be short, uncomplicated, and open-ended, so as to elicit as much information as possible. After having conducted a small number of interviews, the researcher may modify the guideline—or single questions within the guideline—in order to take into account new themes or to control hypotheses that have emerged from the initial interviews. The use of life history interviews can, therefore, progress from an initial exploratory type of technique to a more deductive one. Through the development of initial hypotheses, subsequent interviews can be focused less on studying emerging narratives and more on seeking confirmation of the developed hypotheses. This was, for example, the case with my research on the pathways to armed activism in the Provisional IRA (Bosi 2012, 2016a). It was not until after the first 10 interviews that I started to identify different paths in the mobilization process, which I then further investigated in the following 15 interviews.

The interview process may last a few hours, but it may also require multiple sessions spread out over different days. During the interview itself, it is fundamental that the researcher remain, flexible and focused on the array of meanings that may emerge during the interview process. The researcher should also reassure the (former) activist that they are listening, and that they understand and are interested in what the (former) activist is talking about. As Della Porta suggests, "[I]n all cases, the researcher has to avoid hijacking the interview, by talking too much or being directive" (2014: 175). When silences occur, the researcher should be patient, as the (former) activists may need time to recollect their memories. Moreover, the researcher should elicit opinions and feelings by asking "how" questions. Towards the end of the interview, the (former) activist should answer a set of biographical queries about their age, education, profession, family background, and so on. Finally, at the end of each interview (former) activists should be asked whether they have anything to add, including about their interview experience. Writing up notes shortly after returning from fieldwork is extremely worthwhile, as they may offer a valuable context for the subsequent analysis of transcripts.

There is no one right way to analyze life history interviews. The way we conduct these depends on whether we are interested in a single case study (in-depth case analysis); in combined case studies (comparative case analysis); or in an inductive analysis of interview samples (cross-sectional analysis of the data body). The only certain thing is that life history interviewing is an iterative process that requires the researcher to move back and forth between the data and existing literature. The process is rooted in an inductive–deductive approach. Data analysis begins during the interview itself, when the researcher asks questions and interprets the respondent's answers as the conversation unfolds. Blee and Taylor, referring to the broader use of semi-structured interviews, suggest that here, "analysis and interpretation are ongoing processes. As opposed to quantitative research, which depends on the completion of data collection to begin analysis, designs based on semi-structured interviews require researchers to begin analysing data as it is being collected, and these initial analyses may provoke changes in the study" (2002: 110).

The next step is made during the transcription phase, when the researcher transforms the conversation into a written text. Life history interviews can be transcribed selectively or entirely, depending on the type of analysis: whether the researcher is open to what the data reveals or simply applying concepts imported from the literature, and if they are focusing on only one period in the respondent's life or the entire life course. However, even when interviews are transcribed entirely, some reduction has to be made so as to eliminate repetitive statements and irrelevant data and to produce a fuller and more complete text. Rather than relying exclusively on the transcript, it is important to repeatedly listen to the interview recording, as each time new insights may emerge. In the transcription, the face-to-face conversation becomes abstract and is decontextualized. Hence, while the transcriptions are definitely important, researchers should always go back to the recording of the interviews in order to control the decisions made while transcribing. A good analysis of life history interviews depends on the researcher's ability to understand the data that have been collected well, and to spot significant details as well as gaining new insights about their meaning. Relistening to the audio conversation and carefully rereading the interview transcript is, then, important for the development of a nuanced understanding of the respondent's life history (data intimacy).

Thirdly, after reading the transcripts a number of times, they can be reorganized by thematizing the topic of interest: "[T]his involves the investigator engaging in an interpretative relationship with the transcript" (Smith 1995: 18). Usually, the immersion into the transcripts begins with a full-fledged micro-analysis of a select number of life history interviews. The thematization of these initial data can start from concepts that are imported from existing literature or that may strike the researcher while listening to the respondent talking about their life course. Either way, researchers who conduct life history interviews must remain open to what is contained in the data, identifying recurrent topics, claims, and ideas as well as their layers of meaning, so as to be able to reconstruct the underlying life history. Next, the researcher organizes quotes into clusters, making use of tables, diagrams, and charts, before synthesizing them into new configurations. Furthermore, once the interviews have been transcribed, it becomes possible to structure and analyze them, using a variety of computer programs. Indeed, computer programs facilitate the analysis of interview transcripts, allowing for operations such as writing memos, recording reflections on the interviews for later analysis, coding, searching for keywords, and doing word counts (ATLAS/NUDIST/Nvivo/Maxqda). Although the programs are useful aids for structuring the interview material for further analysis, the task and the responsibility of interpretation nevertheless remains with the researcher. As Roulston observes when referring to qualitative interviews, "[R]esearchers use a wide range of methods to present data, including themes supported by direct quotations from interview transcripts; descriptions and models of processes that may include diagrams and visual representations of key concepts; and narratives that represent participants' experiences and perspectives" (2014: 305).

As with other methods, life history interviews suffer from "problems," such as validity, reliability, and generalizability (Della Porta 1992). For this reason, they are often used in combination with participant observation and documentary methods, in order to assess the consistency of the activists' dynamic trajectory through multiple checks. This is what Paul Thompson defines—speaking about oral history in general—as "searching for internal consistency, cross-checking details from other sources, weighing evidence against a wider context" (1978: 134). However, we should always remember that life history interviews focus less on determining objective facts rather than placing more emphasis on the meaning that activists attach to memories and their trajectories of political engagement in their own terms.

CONCLUSION

By putting activists' dynamic trajectories at the center of analysis, instead of focusing on the preconditions of political participation, as studies adopting large-scale sample surveys usually do, life history interviews allow to recognize the agency of individuals who participate in political life; to contextualize activists lives at both meso- and macro-levels; and to trace the gradual transformation in life trajectories and forms of engagement, rather than single moments of mobilization or disengagement, for example. So, what characterizes the study of political participation through this qualitative methodological tool is, above all, an emphasis on agency, contextualization, and transformation.

Since scholars working on conventional forms of political participation rarely employ life history interviews, future research might adopt this methodological tool in order to investigate the dynamic trajectories of activists involved in political parties, for example. It would be extremely significant to compare the life trajectories of these activists with those activists involved in unconventional forms of political participation, as social movements, for example. Rather than reinforcing the dualism between conventional vs unconventional forms of political participation this possible project might deconstruct it, to unveil possible similarities and differences in activists' trajectories. This type of comparison is only one possible future path of research that scholars adopting this method can undertake in the future, comparing across gender, social class, and education at the micro-level; types of organizations, position within an organization, and organization change at the meso-level; or socio-political context at the macro-level. Combining in a systematic way this methodological tool with large-scale sample surveys might be another possible future line of research for scholars working on political participation in order to possibly strengthen the generalizability of the findings obtained using life history interviews.

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CHAPTER 18

BIG DATA AND THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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Over the last two decades, digital communication technologies of all sorts and particularly social media have become pivotal in all private and public spaces of our lives. When it comes to political participation, digital communication technologies work to foster and, at the same time, blend, permanent electoral campaigns with permanent states of political unrest in a mix of individual and collective courses of political action, human bodies, mediated and direct social interactions, and digital user-generated contents. In this context, the traditional distinction between conventional and non-conventional modes of political participation becomes increasingly blurred, if not completely obsolete. More importantly, the very boundaries along which we define what counts as political participation are redefined and opened up to include a variety of acts of *digitally networked participation*— "networked media-based personalized action that is carried out by individual citizens with the intent to display their own mobilization and activate their social networks in order to raise awareness about, or exert social and political pressures for the solution of, social and political problems" (Theocharis 2015: 6).

Digitally networked participation integrates voting and "offline" collective actions with a torrent of highly personalized, creative, oftentimes ephemeral, but by no means less consequential, forms of online activism—from online petitions and boycotts to hashtag activism to purely digital forms of hacktivism such as net strikes and Distributed Denial of Service attacks (Earl and Kimport 2011, Milan 2013, Van Laer and Van Aelst 2010, Jackson, Bailey, and Foucault Welles 2020). Hence, political participation becomes a conceptual and practical hybrid buttressed by a variety of "e-tactics" (Earl and Kimport 2011: 9): instances of political participation enabled by assembled human and non-human agencies (Lupton and Southerton 2021) and structured by a complex and ever-evolving bundle of relations between online, offline, traditional, and newer modes of engagement.

Tackling and understanding such a hybrid is an admittedly daunting challenge. However, Big Data have proven to be a great ally in this respect. Broadly speaking, Big Data are conventionally recognized as data that are huge in volume, high in velocity, diverse in variety, exhaustive in scope, fine-grained in resolution, uniquely indexical in identification, relational in nature, and flexible insofar as they hold the traits of extensionality and scalability

(Kitchin 2014a). Thus, Big Data are much more than extremely large amounts of data. It is certainly true that data sources derived from environmental sensors, online transactions, app and digital media usage, and electronic scanning of documents or barcodes (just to mention a few Big Data sources) can now reach impressive dimensions. However, it is also true that Big Data do not only come with higher than ever dimensions: they also come in through continuous flows, are extremely fine-grained, flexible, and scale up in quantity and scope rather easily (Kitchin 2014a). More importantly, Big Data usually refer to behaviors and occurrences that we have seldom been able to observe directly and track over time—such as direct interactions and communications between individuals, their consumption patterns, media diets, or even their physical presence in certain areas. As such, Big Data do not simply challenge research practices as they demand new and creative ways to solve storage or calculation problems. More than that, they invite new modes of practicing research combining the advantages of high volumes, velocity, and variety with ever-evolving imaginaries about what Big Data may render possible and the manifold ways in which they can affect our societies (Mattoni and Pavan 2018).

To be sure, studies of political participation are not new to the employment of large amounts of data for they have and continue to lean on large-scale surveys generated ad-hoc within research projects (e.g., Grasso and Giugni 2016) or regularly repeated over time—like in the case of the European Social Survey (e.g., Lo Iacono and Quaranta 2019) or the World Values Survey (Inglehart 2018)—but also on regional barometers that allow to zoom in on different areas from Africa (Pilati 2011) to Europe (Bundi and Freitag 2020). Yet, only more recently have they started to include Big Data and the whole range of analytical techniques that have mushroomed to handle them—from machine and deep learning, to clustering and decision tree algorithms, language processing, and network mining and tracing. Particularly widespread in this respect are social media data which, together with ever-evolving computational network and content analysis techniques, are increasingly employed to shed light on organizational and symbolic production dynamics underpinning contemporary social movements (e.g., Hanna 2013; Jackson, Bailey, and Foucault Welles 2020; Joseph, Gallagher, and Foucault Welles 2020; Meraz and Papacharissi 2013; Pavan and Mainardi 2018; Theocharis et al. 2015; Recuero et al. 2015), but also on patterns of increasing political polarization (e.g., Yarchi, Baden, and Kliger-Vilenchik 2020), and on the effects of fake news consumption (e.g., Grinberg et al. 2019).

Not differently from other scientific research domains, the entrance of Big Data in the field of political participation studies has elicited debates and, as it often happens, clashes between supporters and skeptics of the much heralded “data revolution” (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013). Few would doubt the potential that comes from the automated collection and classification of large amounts of information about protest events (Fisher et al. 2019) or, as just mentioned, from using social media data to investigate the manifold instances of digitally networked participation and e-tactics. At the same time, the application of Big Data in the study of other forms of participation—from voting to working within a political group to offline protest participation—is more limited, and their appropriateness remains, in fact, contested, particularly in light of their non-representativeness as well as of the difficulties in accessing and crossing them with other data—such as voting turnouts or consumer data—that appear to be crucial to gain a genuine understanding of participation patterns (Dalton 2016) .

Certainly, the debate about Big Data's promises and pitfalls is likely to remain endless, and good arguments will continue to be made on both sides. To avoid remaining stuck in the middle, I think a fruitful attitude consists of not carving in stone either the advantages that Big Data can create or their inevitable limits. The belief that Big Data will necessarily revolutionize political participation studies as much as they revolutionized the study of human behaviors and society (Lazer et al. 2009) flows from what Boyd and Crawford call the "Big Data mythology"—that is, "the widespread belief that large datasets offer a higher form of intelligence and knowledge that can generate insights that were previously impossible, with the aura of truth, objectivity, and accuracy" (2012: 663). Cutting-edge applications of Big Data are giving us many reasons to be excited about the future of political participation studies and, at the very same time, not enough to surrender to the fascination of the Big Data myth.

As noted by Robert Kitchin (2014a), data are always "constructed" in precise historical contexts and moments. Big Data make no exception to this general principle. Even if in our datafied society (Mayer-Schönberger and Cukier 2013) data are and come from everywhere, Big Data remain abstractions of actual behaviors and settings as they often consist of the "digital traces" (Lazer et al. 2009) that we leave behind while living our days through the mediation of networked technologies—from social media to commercial platforms, to supermarkets checkouts and sensors—or that result from the digitalization of existing materials and procedures—as it happens through the informatization of the public administration. What is more and, perhaps, the very reason for which Big Data are dramatically different from the data we have used thus far in social and political research, is that they are seldom generated in response to specific research aims and are instead *reconverted* to this purpose (Kitchin 2014a).

My claim in this chapter is that Big Data *can* boost the study of political participation as long as this reconversion is piloted by a research orientation that is, at the same time, aware of data specificities, proactively ready to integrate theory-driven knowledge production modes, and methodologically creative. Albeit very powerful, neither these data nor the analytical techniques they invite are all-mighty: on their own, Big Data do not automatically generate "Big" knowledge. It is only when large amounts of digital and digitalized data are approached in theoretically and methodologically sound but imaginative ways that their intensive computational analysis contributes to produce scientifically valid and, most importantly, socially relevant knowledge on citizens' participation.

In what follows, I will discuss the elements I think are necessary for making Big Data thrive in political participation research. I will begin by illustrating the features that contribute to mark the uniqueness of Big Data. I will then move on to discuss the main traits of an ontologically aware, epistemologically proactive, and methodologically creative research orientation that should guide their choice, inclusion, and treatment within research courses.

Big Data between Ontological Definitions and Research-Related Properties

Reflecting on Big Data's ontological peculiarities, Kitchin (2014a, 2014b) proposes to distinguish them from more traditional "small data" derived from surveys and administrative sources along seven main dimensions: *volume*, as data are so numerous that they require high storage capacities; *velocity*, as they are produced and captured continually; *variety*, as they come in a multiplicity of structured, unstructured, and semi-structured forms; *exhaustivity*, that is, the fact that data refer to entire populations rather than to samples; *resolution and indexicality*, as they capture with the finest-grain resolution information about uniquely identified subjects and/or entities; *relationality*, as data can be linked across different sites and times of production; *extensionality and scalability*, as they morph together with the systems that produce them and are created in non-linear non-cumulative ways.

A recent comparison between different large-scale datasets labeled as "Big" by researchers shows that these characteristics are seldom present all at once (Kitchin and McArdel 2016). For example, social media and mobile phone data are both generated and published in large quantities, continuously and in real time, but only the former possesses the element of extensionality as social media apps and algorithms change quite rapidly while mobile communications remain constant. Very much like social media data, satellite data are exhaustive insofar as they provide the full coverage of an area. At the same time, the number of observations for the same point is lower than for social media data as these latter refer to every and each action performed by a user, while the focus of the satellite moves during its scanning activity and returns to the same spot only after a while. Thus, while the elements of *velocity* and *exhaustivity* seem to be the very "boundary markers" with respect to more traditional types of data (for example, census data that are exhaustive but produced every ten years or so and are published in aggregated forms), Big Data should be conceived as an analytical category encompassing a continuum of different data instances that combine specific ontological features in different ways (ibid.).

Complementing these definitional attempts are more contextualized descriptions that assess the characteristics of Big data in relation to the empirical study of societies and human behaviors. These descriptions are particularly useful to zoom in on the added value of Big Data for political participation research as they are framed situationally against the difficult task of grasping the complexities of individual and collective political behaviors. In this sense, Salganik (2018: 18–40) distinguishes between two sets of generally useful and generally troublesome data features. As for the former, beside the abundance of observation points and the richness of information that can be derived for each of them, the *"always on"* nature of this type of data constitutes a generally useful feature in that it allows to model in flexible ways the element of time searching for sparks of change within micro-timeframes (at the fraction of seconds) or larger intervals. A third relevant feature consists of the nonreactive nature of Big Data which, as mentioned earlier, are not elicited through specific research *stimuli* (like a survey or an interview) but, rather, record action performed in (allegedly) natural settings.

Compensating these advantages are a set of intrinsic limitations. Precisely because Big Data tend to be generated outside of research endeavors, they are likely to be *incomplete* (Salganik 2018: 24–26). On the one hand, several pieces of information that are key for political participation studies, such as individual attributes, are systematically missing or not reliable as they are self-declared, for example, when suers oper their social media profiles. Scholars are developing an increasing number of methods, from crowdsourced to automated annotation techniques, in order to estimate demographic characteristics of social media users, but much remains to be done in terms of ensuring accuracy and fairness in the representations inferred (Radford and Joseph 2020).

On the other hand, information contained within Big datasets is seldom sufficient to ensure construct validity (Cook and Cambell 1979)—that is, to provide an adequate and sound operationalization of abstract concepts. This problem has appeared particularly relevant, albeit often glossed over, in the study of digitally networked participation. As social media enable the reshaping of the boundaries between public and private spaces (Boyd 2010) and impose a network logic of action (Bennett and Segerberg 2013), almost everything could be considered, at least in principle, an instance of political participation. Yet, as Theocharis (2015) notes, if a huge variety of social media uses configures as political, not necessarily all of them constitute acts of participation—as it happens in the case of Facebook likes, which are better understood as expressions of preferences and attitudes.

Moreover, albeit exhaustive, Big Data are rarely representative of populations that are particularly meaningful for political participation studies (Dalton 2016; Salganik 2018). While it is commonly acknowledged that, for example, Facebook or Twitter users are not representative of entire national populations, triangulation of different data sources allows isolating representative subsets of social media users to approximate, for example, the US voters' population (Grinberg et al. 2019). However, cross-validation of data remains demanding and bound to the varying availability of other data sources that refer to individual behaviors—from voters' lists to individual consumption data, to informational habits—across different countries and contexts (Dalton 2016). Thus, the question of whether social media data and Big Data more generally can be used to accurately estimate offline behaviors such as voting and political attitudes remains wide open.

Adding to Big Data non-representativeness is also their instability in terms of population, as users of social media platforms activate irregularly; uses, as social media features are appropriated in different ways; and broader systems, as platforms and technologies constantly change (Salganik 2018: 33–34). Albeit there is no unique solution to account for and handle in practice this variability, a common solution consists of acting at the level of concept operationalization by tracing one or more benchmark lines—as it happens for example when "activity" on social media is approximated through numbers of interventions and a conventional threshold is set to distinguish between more or less active users (e.g., Gonzàles-Bailon et al 2013; Lotan et al. 2011) or more or less relevant contents to be screened (e.g., Gaby and Caren 2012; Mercea 2018; Recuero et al. 2015).

A further challenging aspect pertains to the alleged nonreactive nature of these data. It is certainly true that leaning on repurposed data eliminates the active intervention of the researcher in the phase of data creation and allows to work with materials that refer to actions performed in their own context. However, it also true that the problem of reactivity is hardly erased *tout court*. Particularly in the case of social media data, the active interventions of platforms' affordances, policies and, most relevantly, algorithms need to be taken into systematic account as courses of (political) actions are "algorithmically confounded" (Salganik 2018: 35). Importantly, algorithm-driven patterns of incidental exposure to political contents entwine with individuals' selective information behaviors as well as with pre-existing affiliation to political organizations, thus reinforcing people's identities, attitudes, and beliefs. but also stimulating content-related practices (such as sharing political news) that end up affecting also the attitudes and beliefs of their contacts (Weeks et al. 2017). Similarly, while the inclusion of trending information within petition platforms seems to have no effects in terms of broadening engagement rates, it significantly affects the distribution of signatures granting further support to petitions that are already highly endorsed, and orients the choices of individuals who are eager to contribute but have not decided what causes to support (Hale et al. 2018).

This problem is hardly bypassed even when Big datasets are created ad-hoc for research purposes. For example, the automated crawling of multiple news sources surmounts many of the difficulties that have so far characterized protest event analysis by means of machine learning and natural language processing techniques that enable the search, annotation, and prediction of episodes of contention (Fisher et al. 2019). At the same time, these advantages are constantly challenged by persistent biases induced by newsworthiness criteria and discretional narrative choices at the level of crawled sources, which generate several discrepancies, particularly with respect to reported numbers of participants and protest motivations (ibid.).

FROM "BIGGER THAN USUAL" TO "FURTHER THAN EVER"

As mentioned earlier, data instances that are labeled in empirical research as "Big" are of different sorts and rarely present all the ontological features that constitute the "Big Data genus" (Kitchin and McArdel 2016: 9). Moreover, regardless of their undoubtable ontological distinctiveness, Big Data remain necessarily limited, albeit in new and unexpected ways, when measured against the formidable task of understanding individual and collective courses of political participation. Against this background, one could be tempted to conclude that current research on political participation has simply gone "bigger than usual" as it leans on data that allow to scale up (and down) to unprecedented levels the scope of research, but also to anticipate sudden events like massive uprisings (Steinert-Threlked et al. 2015).

However, good chances exist also to go beyond a mere scale effect and to generate a "Big" knowledge in the field. When imbricated with an orientation that is, at the same time, aware, proactive, and creative, Big Data enable political participation research to switch from "bigger than usual" to "further than ever," advancing our understanding of the forms and consequences of digitally networked participation (Theocharis 2015), allowing us to tackle the critical role of social media conversations to frame contentious dynamics (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013) or create collective identities (Jackson, Bailey, and Foucault Welles 2020) and protest communities (Joseph, Gallagher, and Foucault Welles 2020), affording us to unveil the effects of platform materiality on civic participation (Hale et al. 2018) and ideological and affective polarization (Yarchi et al. 2020) but also to trace complex patterns of fake news circulation and their reflections on voting behaviors (Grinberg et al. 2019).

Ontological Awareness

The element of awareness refers to the ontological specificity of Big Data—not exclusively with respect to other types of data but, more broadly, to the type of abstraction they allow of the political world we aim at investigating. As Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger (2015: 1, emphasis in the original) have noticed, Big Data carry their own "powerful (and often pernicious) assumption about the nature of *the social*"—one that is incapsulated within the systems enabling their production while intervening within daily human courses of action or in the generation of large-scale research resources. It is thus in relation to this distinct vision that researchers end up making necessarily situated choices about how to distinguish between a merely self-expressive act on social media and instances of online political participation (Theocharis 2015), or about whether or not a news item that is automatically crawled by ad-hoc trained scripts does in fact refer to a protest event (Fisher et al. 2019). Thus, approaching Big Data with ontological awareness entails a thorough evaluation of how these data "stand in relation to life" (Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger 2015:2) and, more specifically, of how revelatory they can be of contemporary political participation processes.

First, the identification of *entities* that substantiate participation processes and, therefore, capture analysts' attention is inevitably affected by the type and, in fact, by the richness of these data (Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger 2015: 5). When crawling automatically multiple news sources, social media platforms, and organization websites, algorithms lift from researchers' shoulders the burden of digging within texts in search for protest events. In order to do so, algorithms must be carefully instructed not only to recognize events but, more importantly, to isolate protest events amongst all collected event-entities (Fisher et al. 2019). While the numbers of collected event-entities largely surpass those generated through human coding, a lot of noise can be registered too (as selection criteria tend to be broad to avoid missing important entities) and needs to be eliminated through a manual check of all collected materials (ibid.). When it comes instead to reconverted data, datasets generated by harvesting social media API do contain a whole set of pre-identified entities—from unique ID accounts to a variety of content-related entities such as pictures, links, and texts, up to points in time and localities. As such, these data already invite "pre-formatted" empirical operationalizations of participation patterns, and it remains a responsibility of the researcher to decide to what extent to cling to them. In this process, some available data will be considered "exhaust" (Kitchin 2014a) and therefore ignored, whereas often the need to identify other useful entities emerges and triggers a set of discretional choices about how to further process and re-structure highly malleable data.

One domain in which this aspect has proved to be particularly relevant is the analysis of digital media discourses. If social media data provide a unique entry point to study the configurations and the implication of an enlarged and multilayered networked public sphere (Bruns and Highfield 2016), a key ontological choice comes in when deciding whether relevant discourse-related entities should be identified looking at single words or keywords—such as Twitter hashtags—or at the broader contents of messages. Widespread attention for Twitter hashtags, for example, has allowed to characterize these particular entities in sociotechnical terms, combining the function they play within the Twitter technical system with their multifaceted social functions—as aggregators of "affective publics" (Papacharissi 2016) and "high-level framing devices" (Meraz and Papacharissi 2013)—as well as with their manifold communicative functions (Recuero et al. 2015). At the same time, alternative approaches that focus on the totality of social media contents are pushed forward, starting from the assumption that research pivoting around hashtags tends to exclude a multitude of pertinent inputs which do not make use of this specific feature, omit the overall context of utterances, and remain often platform-centered (Hanna 2013). To be sure, there are no good or bad entities one can or is forced to choose from. Rather, identifying relevant entities is always a discretional and contextual choice which can be more or less adequate depending on how deeply it grounds within a sound recognition of the assembled social and technical nature of Big Data.

A second crucial ontological choice pertains to what entities are considered *agents* within participation processes (Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger 2015: 6). Especially when the focus is set on online participation dynamics, Big Data offer the unique possibility of analyzing the forms and the implications of non-human agents such as social bots. Paralleling increasing awareness on the relevance and even the perniciousness of these software programs (Guilbeault 2016), automated detection procedures are being developed that allow to identify social bots starting from a set of social media profile features, and thus to assess their position and role within large-scale online discussions on politically relevant topics. Recent investigations in this area importantly show that social bots do not act randomly but, rather, constitute a "squad" whose members strategically sit amongst followers of prominent accounts and work in a coordinated manner to amplify specific partisan messages (Caldarelli et al. 2020). However, concerns with the detection and the tracing of bots remain still minoritarian in the field.

With attention steadily set on human-related courses of political action, crucial choices must be made about the criteria according to which human agency is deemed "meaningful enough" to be considered, and also on how to tie it to actors' specific attributes. As mentioned earlier, in some cases the gaze is oriented towards hyperactive users, whereas in other cases attention is distributed across wider groups. While different choices are motivated by different research aims, the problem of differentiating between types of agents cuts transversally these two scenarios. For example, recent studies that employ mobile phone location data to estimate overall participation within protests are faced with the conundrum of how to distinguish between protesters and bystanders and, to this aim, employ ad-hoc designed benchmarks derived from mobile activity levels in the same area a week before observed protests (Rotman and Shalev 2020). Likewise, studies that aim at disentangling the effects of fake news online consumption onto voting behaviors do identify actual voters amongst randomly selected social media users triangulating different data sources—information from users' profiles, survey data on political behaviors, and voters' registrars (Grinberg et al. 2019). Similarly, in-depth explorations of online conversations during protest events (Pavan and Mainardi 2018, Gonzales-Bailon et al. 2013; Lotan et al. 2011) as much as during electoral campaigns (Bracciale, Martella, and Visentin 2018) distinguish between a variety of actor types sometimes leaning on information taken from personal profiles (often qualitatively assessed) and some other times looking at degrees of activity and popularity within specific conversations or broader platform spaces. Also in this case, the variety of practical solutions that are being adopted follows from the richness of available data and the specificity of research questions; but the challenge of how to identify and account for the wide range of actors engaged within political processes remains vast.

A third crucial ontological choice connects to how time is treated through Big Data (Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger 2015: 6–7). To a certain extent, the velocity of Big Data imposes explicit attention to the time and timing of political participation, which has remained in the background of electoral participation studies, so centered on institutional rhythms, and has only recently returned to be explicitly problematized within social movement studies (Gillan and Edwards 2020). For example, collective mobilizations online are typically traced in terms of "networked publics" (Boyd 2010) coalescing around the shared use of Twitter hashtags (e.g., Meraz and Papacharissi 2013, Papacharissi 2016). In the study of these aggregations, the element of time is, at the same time, emphasized and constrained. On the one hand, the capillary minute-by-minute reconstruction of online interactions allows to shed new light, for example, on protest diffusion dynamics through the reconstruction of information cascades (e.g., Lotan et al. 2011). On the other hand, with data that are so oriented towards the present, the timing of protest is often reduced to peakiness, albeit operationalized in different ways (Jungherr and Jürgens 2014); sliced down using offline events as guidance when not directly employing conventional daily, monthly, yearly thresholds; or even concealed within overarching interaction networks or flows of contents. Notwithstanding the incredible advantages generated by real-time and fine-grained mapping of online dynamics, the timing of Big Data makes it hard to find the traces and the effects of longer-term historical memories and previous mobilizations, but also to identify and chain different protest events amongst themselves—a key operation to grasp the processual nature of collective action (Diani 1992).

Epistemological Proactivity

The element of proactivity refers to the necessity of adopting a research orientation that grows its roots within ontological awareness and stands in between the consolidated theory-driven deductive approach that has characterized much of political participation research so far, and the purely inductive approach that is intrinsic to new empiricist views of data-driven social science. When studying political participation, this translates into the challenging task of assigning a new place and, in fact, a new role to theory within overall research endeavors.

Researchers moving within the framework of computational social science typically identify strict adherence to social science theoretical frameworks as a hindrance to the development of new and allegedly more fruitful paradigms to study society (Lazer et al. 2009) as it generates a "categorical myopia" (Goldberg 2015:2)—that is, the tendency to continue searching for variables and elements associated with already known explanatory patterns. Conversely, more skeptical observers from within the social and political sciences lament the risks of approaches that export logics designed to anticipate consumers' behavior to the field of political research, endorsing a view of "validation by successful prediction" that disregards *why* certain courses of political action occur (Dalton 2016). For example, in commenting the delicate relationship between causal inference and Big Data in the study of electoral results, Nagler and Tucker (2015) invite to refrain from deriving any conclusions from the correlation that is often observed between the number of tweets and votes received by candidates. Albeit statistically significant, the authors argue, a model that predicts electoral success starting from received tweets does in fact ignore the many factors that may have contributed to generate broader attention around certain candidates—such as greater economic investment during the electoral campaign, the number of supporters in a certain district, reputational issues, and so on.

To be sure, social computing research concerned with digital politics considerably resizes the role of theory as it aims primarily at developing new techniques to organize, analyze, and improve digital platforms for social interaction (Freelon 2015). Similarly, machine learning models may be developed within computer sciences combining a rather "opportunistic" approach to available data and a good deal of "intuition" (Radford and Joseph 2020). While approaches like these can certainly be criticized for overlooking the very substance around which models are defined, one should not ignore the specificities of the disciplinary context in which they emerge, nor assume that the inclusion of computational tools within political participation research will strip the domain of its tenets.

As much as it happened in the "small data era," research practices that contemplate Big Data entail manifold discretional choices which ground in theory-driven considerations—from the very belief that it is *worth* reconstructing the world starting from digital traces, to how to deal with potential limitations in terms of exhaustivity and representativity, or how to instruct algorithms and pre-process and (further) organize huge amounts of more or less structured data, up to the interpretation of results (Boyd and Crawford 2012, Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger 2015).

However, acknowledging that research continues to be theoretically grounded, situated, and discretional also when it uses Big Data is not tantamount to affirming that it is just a variation on a theme. Political participation research that fruitfully includes Big Data is innovative insofar as it adopts a "forensic approach" (Goldberg 2015) for which courses of political action are not (solely) investigated through the parsing of a set of theory-driven variables but, in fact, scanned at large under the guidance of discretional theoretical and ontological preferences with the aim of creating, rather than simply testing, theoretical insights. For example, machine learning classification of user-generated contents on social media holds the potential to move beyond operationalizations of political orientation that derive from the self-positioning of survey respondents along a linear ideological spectrum or from their interest in specific topics traditionally associated with liberalism and conservatism (Radford and Joseph 2020). However, it is only when theories on political polarization are embedded in the model design that this classification endeavor ceases to be merely an "exercise in engineering" and becomes a crucial research step towards understanding the causes of social and political instability (ibid.). At the same time, framing automated classifications as part of research tasks geared towards understanding polarization dynamics imposes specific attention to how latent political orientation is detected. As noticed by Cohen and Ruths (2013), existing classification attempts have overlooked the consequences of constructing test datasets that overrepresent users with a clear (and often overtly declared) political orientation. When tested on datasets composed of users who sporadically intervene on political matters, existing classifiers are in fact less accurate, and possibilities to generate valid information decrease significantly (ibid.).

Nonetheless, examples of empirical research that proactively couple theory-driven knowledge and data-driven analysis are rapidly multiplying. Machine learning classification of social media contents has recently served not only to disentangle different forms of political polarization at the crossroads between social and semantic aspects (Yarchi, Baden, and Kliger-Vilenchik 2020), but also to clarify the effects of leaders' populist communication in terms of users' engagement, revealing that instrumental uses of populism as a communication style mobilize more consensus than simple references to populist ideology (Bracciale, Andretta, and Martella 2021). Similarly, where extant theories of online activism typically stress that social media communications stimulate coordination, persuasion, and discussion within collective actions settings, computer-aided content analysis of Facebook posts confirms and, at the same time, specifies this claim, suggesting five specific "mobilization patterns": fostering offline coordination, pursuing online action, attracting media and press attention, reporting on protest events, and information request (Hanna 2013). Similarly, open-ended investigations of online conversations have definitively dismantled long-term assumptions on the horizontality of digital conversations, proving not only that institutional elites remain central (Zhu 2015) but that patterns of centrality also change over time and in tight connection with offline courses of contentious action (Pavan and Mainardi 2018).

Methodological Creativity

The dynamic and yet persistent link between theory and methods that flows from the adoption of a proactive research orientation ensures that "Big" political participation research is not reduced to mere toying with data "in the hope that they reveal some hidden truth" (Kitchin 2014b: 6). Against this background, a plethora of methods have been developed and applied to combine and analyze different datasets to shed light on the different facets of the political participation hybrid.

Certainly, Big Data open the possibility to boost quantitative research to an unprecedented level—for example, allowing to model voting behaviors based on online information fruition patterns (Greinberg et al. 2019); enabling natural experiments to assess the effect of platform instability on political behaviors (Hale et al. 2018); or detecting the conditions under which individuals will remain engaged within highly inflamed online political discussions (Shugars and Beauchamp 2019). Furthermore, as hinted earlier, the generation of ad-hoc datasets geared towards the study of protest events is providing richer starting points to innovate already existent methods of social movement research such as protest event analysis (Fisher et al. 2019) and the quantitative study of mobilization patterns (Rotman and Shalev 2020).

Flanking the re-energization of quantitative research is the percolation of computationally assisted methods for data preprocessing and analysis. The automated treatment, particularly of network and textual data, translates in practice the creativity that sparks from the aware and proactively oriented inclusions of Big Data within empirical research endeavors and triggers a myriad of applications advancing in a cross-dimensional fashion the study of electoral participation and polarization dynamics as much as that of social movements. Any attempt to catalogue this deluge would result in a long and necessarily incomplete list of instances with little if no actual added value.

Perhaps it is more useful to point out that, above any deluge, there are always a limited number of clouds—which is in fact where we look to see if and how much it will continue to rain. Out of metaphor: the myriad of practical and situated realizations of Big Data research stems from a set of a-priori, and yet never definitive, choices on the type of help one needs from non-human research collaborators. Wagner-Pacifici and her co-authors (2015: 3) speak in this respect of a duality between "mind and machine" which drives the crucial choice between supervised and unsupervised techniques. In some cases, machines play a part only at the initial stage as they serve to collect data, especially from social media platforms, and to extract random or purposive samples of texts that are manually coded, for example with respect to the function performed by a post (e.g., Theocharis et al. 2015), or starting from a visual analysis of pictures enclosed within messages (Neumayer and Rossi 2018). In other cases, however, their role is more decisive. In the automated analysis of texts, algorithms can either assist the researcher in classifying documents into known categories through supervised learning techniques based on lexicons or on the compilation and application of training sets; or to discover relevant thematic categories directly from the data through document clustering, dimensionality reduction and, most notably, topic-modeling techniques (Petchler and Gonzàles-Bailon 2015). In the analysis of large-scale networks, whether social or semantic, algorithms bring to visibility hidden relational patterns typically enabling the identification of network clusters or communities based on ties distribution or modularity (Himelboim et al. 2017).

Choosing to lean more or less extensively on the "human mind" or, conversely, on the "machine" is, not very surprisingly, another discretional and situated research choice. Supervised methods are key to the task of organizing massive amounts of information into "meaningful categories of knowledge" (Goldberg 2015: 2) but remain quite costly, especially considering the necessity to guarantee high-level training sets or lexicons that are tailored to grasp ideological and affective political leanings (Petchler and Gonzàles-Bailon 2015). Unsupervised methods, instead, come in particularly handy when texts need to be read through the eyes of a "linguistically ignorant reader" (Wagner-Pacifici, Mohr, and Breiger 2015: 3) so that algorithmic annotations are completely devoid of any linguistic or cultural superimposition and can help spark new intuitions also for theory-loaded minds.

Conclusion

Political participation studies have not remained indifferent to the progressive percolation of Big Data in the field of scientific research. Vibrant debates that continue to accompany the increasing application of these peculiar resources speak to a persistent, and yet healthy, tension with respect to the promises and the pitfalls that Big Data bring along. Certainly, research in this domain has proven rather successful in wearing the "habitus of the new" (Papacharissi and Easton 2013) that increased patterns of datafication and digitalization require us to put on. Working in continuity with extant theories and, at the same time, "incubating" (ibid.) in aware, proactive, and creative ways the novelty of Big Data and their analysis, investigations are not simply getting "bigger than usual" but, as I argued, are moving "further than ever."

Switching from *bigger* to *further* is more than a play on words: It is, in fact, a necessary change of perspective that invites to reconsider the pace and, more relevantly from my point of view, the motivations for which we include Big Data in our research. As I claimed at the beginning of this chapter, I do not consider Big Data as a resource that automatically produces "Big" knowledge. And yet, Big Data *can* advance our understanding of individual and collective political engagement and participation in manyfold and unpredictable ways if their specificities are imbricated with a sound research orientation.

Those who fear that the hybridization of political participation studies with the logics and the modus operandi of computational disciplines, when not directly with commercial and profit-oriented lines of reasoning, will dilute the thickness of knowledge produced do move an excellent point. Current possibilities of studying political participation through Big Data tap on a variety of privacy and ethical issues that I have not even begun to discuss in this chapter but that are simply pivotal—most notably, the lack of informed consent from citizens whose tweets and Facebook posts are collected for research purposes, the safeguard of their right to freely express, the necessity to ensure that the knowledge we produce does not harm the individuals whose traces we analyze, and the imperative to pursue research that is transparent, accountable, inclusive, and fair (Boyd and Ellison 2012; Earl 2018). Furthermore, practices of "computational politics" through which citizens' consensus is "engineered" via a careful and constant monitoring of their online behaviors and the realization of real-time experiments are indisputably establishing new asymmetries and control regimes that favor already tremendously powerful political, financial, and commercial elites (Tufekci 2014). At the same time, especially in the early stages, Big Data have been introduced quickly, perhaps even recklessly, within research courses, without endorsing the research orientation that I suggested is key to mastering their potential.

If there are certainly very good reasons to throw away the dirty water, I think there are even more to keep the baby, continue bathing her, and change the water as often as we can. The progressive inclusion of Big Data within political participation research pulls to pieces easy claims about the "death of theory" and the "obsolescence of the scientific method" advanced only few years ago by overly enthusiastic supporters of the data revolution (Anderson 2008). Daily research practices crystallized within scientific journal articles and book chapters show that theories are still there, alive and kicking, re-energized by the application of computational methods which, in any case, are seldom deemed sufficient to face the tremendous challenges entailed by studying political behaviors. More often than not, supervised and unsupervised methods of content analysis as much as the analysis of large-scale networks are subjected to serious validation processes and used either in conjunction amongst themselves or coupled also with qualitative techniques (Hanna 2013). Neither passively invested by the Big Data "mythology" nor trenched within the ivory towers of their theories, researchers in the field of political participation are moving, one step after another, a bit further.

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CHAPTER 19

VISUAL ANALYSIS AND THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

NOA MILMAN AND NICOLE DOERR

Visual analysis, applied to political participation research, is conceived of as the developing of concepts and methods used to analyze visual types of data, including a wide range of physical, representational, and public visibility elements that exist in forms of political participation (Doerr, Mattoni, and Teune 2012; Doerr and Milman 2014). In a context of globalized societies, digital communication and social media have inspired an increasing number of political participation researchers to start including images and visual forms of data in their research. Based on an interdisciplinary discussion of visual analysis in sociology, political science, discourse and media analysis, cultural and gender studies, this chapter will explore the theoretical assumptions, potential research questions, and fields of visual analysis, including emerging research fields such as digital visual analysis using mixed methods and qualitative or quantitative data. The case studies and examples of visual analysis reviewed in this chapter are based on our ongoing empirical research on the Black Lives Matter movement and on immigrants' rights movements in Europe.

Visual analysis can be extended to include three aspects of political participation dynamics: (1) visual manifestations, as a class of expressions, produced by citizens, civil society and protest movements, and various types of political actors; (2) the representation of citizens, political parties, and political actors in images disseminated in media arenas and through digitalized media channels; and (3) a larger societal framework granting visibility to certain groups and claims while others remain invisible (Doerr, Mattoni, and Teune 2012). We will provide empirical examples for these three dimensions by discussing our case studies focusing on (1) visual strategies of public expression of Black Lives Matter protesters internationally and in Denmark, (2) the visual representation of protesters by the media and, (3), in interaction, the visibility of BLM in the context of Danish media debates about migration politics. We include examples based on visual qualitative and quantitative analysis of digital media, public discourse, and public street protest including the toppling of statues, and erecting citizen statues representing famous persona contested by BLM protesters.

Among the key findings of visual studies of political participation is that images contain complex, open-ended aesthetic frames of meaning that have the power to communicate different messages to different audiences, and can reach various language speakers and target groups nationally and transnationally (Müller 2007; Doerr 2010, Doerr and Teune 2012; Doerr, Mattoni, and Teune 2012; Doerr and Milman 2014; Bleiker 2018). This finding has been confirmed in research on digital images and memes spreading populist or far right-wing extremist ideologies and frames to mainstream voters (Schober 2019; Bogerts and Fielitz 2019; Doerr 2021).

Definitions and Dilemmas: Conceptualizing and Carrying Out Visual Analysis

The visual analysis of political participation builds on interdisciplinary theories and insights by scholars coming from a range of different disciplines and fields, including cultural studies and research on gender and feminism, art history, media and communication studies, and post-structuralism among others (see for an overview, Doerr and Teune 2012). In political science, one systematic research approach toward visual analysis has come from scholars of international relations studying dramatic visual real-time events like the terrorist attacks of September 11, focusing on the conflict potential and power of visual forms of political communication (Bleiker 2018). Sociologists studying transnational protest movements have called for research on the actors behind the power of global images and visual diffusion, including extremist and terrorist groups as well as state actors (Doerr 2010). While most visual analysts in political science and sociology probably agree on the importance of visual forms of participation, an open theoretical question is to determine what should count as an image, and how we can study images (Doerr and Milman 2014).

In the debate about what constitutes an image, in comparison to a "text," visual analysts, who typically come from a background in art history and visual media analysis, have recognized as legitimate objects that meet the strict sense of what is considered visual. These include mostly photographs, documents, posters or other material visuals found in print, such as newspapers, and visual forms found online or in other non-print media, that present themselves to the scholar (Müller 2007). Other analysts, coming from the field of discourse analysis take a broader approach, proposing the inclusion of mentally constructed images that are expressed in different discursive forms as well as the aforementioned stricter sense of visuals (Doerr 2010).

Connecting our own political science and sociology backgrounds, in our previous work we have developed a three-step interdisciplinary method that integrates the aforementioned theoretical debates and a variety of conceptual approaches to develop a social science based multimodal visual analysis that draws insights from visual art history and discourse and frame analysis (Doerr and Milman 2014; Doerr 2017). Moreover, one first important insight from visual theories in art history and the humanities is that we cannot understand an image independent from its social context, and we ourselves, as viewers, are part of the social context in which an image exists (Rose 2006). For example, if we want to explain why a particular poster produced by an activist group has been shared and diffused widely across different countries, we, as analysts, may implicitly impose our own experience of the image on our attempts at neutral, scientific analysis (ibid). This would be problematic as visual theorists assume that images have their own effects, they "act" upon the viewers, and not all of the powerful effects of images can be studied by social science methods given that these methods have to translate the powerful effects of images back into text-based "data" (Schober 2019). As a way to tackle this issue in our own work we use three-steps of 1) visual content analysis, 2) visual iconography, and 3) contextualization, in order to analyze images in their historical context of creation, diffusion, recontextualization, as well as the decoding by audiences (Doerr and Milman 2014). Here, our third step of contextual analysis helps us to deepen the interpretation of visual data through the addition of interviews and other triangulation research strategies, which validate our analysis and help us to minimize our own bias as visual analysts (Rose 2006).

THREE PATHWAYS INTO THE VISUAL ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In combining sociological thinking and political science approaches to visual analysis we can distinguish three broad, cross-cutting pathways into studying visual forms and formats of political participation: First, the "visual forms of expression" in people's political participation; second, the "visual representation" of people's political engagement; and third, the visibility of political participation within societies more broadly defined (Doerr, Mattoni, and Teune 2012: xii). The first line of inquiry (visual expression) accounts for *how* engaged citizens, civic associations, politicians, or activists communicate their messages visually and aesthetically by using images (ibid.). The second line of inquiry studies *visual representations* or *representative images* of political participation in the media. In this way, visual analysis is effective in addressing questions about political culture, strategies (of visual representation), and identity (for example, the visual representation of gender in media images of participation). The third line of inquiry addresses research questions on people's *visibility* and *invisibility* in the broader societal context—an area of research for which scholars have used a combination of different approaches. Thinking about political competition, conflict dynamics, and the (in)visibility of particular social or political groups, it is clear that people do not all have the same chances of being seen, and/or shaping their own images in the public sphere.

Elsewhere, we have provided an overview of interdisciplinary theories and methods for studying visual images including photographs, memes, symbols, posters, stickers, or paintings combining qualitative or quantitative approaches (Doerr and Milman 2014). Given the wide range of options for using visual analysis, in the following section, we will present examples of qualitative and quantitative visual approaches that we used to study the visual representation of Black Lives Matter protests, and the visibility of minority voices and migrants' political participation and claims-making within media debates about citizenship, diversity, and migration.

Visual Expression of Protest: BLM Images and Protest Gestures in the US and Europe

Visual digital media, mobile phone cameras, and video footage of police brutality are at the heart of visual forms of mobilization and expression by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the US and internationally. The widespread mobilization of the BLM movement in the US, and its subsequent transnational diffusion in the world were triggered and facilitated by visual public events, causing moral outrage and shock in the US and internationally. Most recently, the video of the killing of George Floyd in June 2020 triggered protest marches all over the world (Russell 2020). Yet researchers studying the visual dynamics of protest diffusion in digital and social media have been cautious to assume that the same public image would acquire similar political meaning in different local or national contexts. Our findings on the visual expression of BLM protests in European contexts such as in Denmark and Germany document how activists have developed place-specific visual framing strategies for communicating their protests following the murder of George Floyd so as to link their local protests to situated histories of colonialism and racism in their respective countries. We shall show how activists translated and recontextualized the visual repertoires of protest from the US to their varying national and local political and cultural contexts, combining their specific protest traditions with global and transnational master frames such as racial justice.

We assume that the role of visual images and videos was key to the emergence of BLM, and the movement's diffusion through millions of images shared globally among protesters. In her historical sociology of visual forms of protest and political participation in the public sphere Anna Schober (2019) has shown that since the French Revolution, members of repressed communities have always used visual communication strategies, including fashion, and particular dress codes during public marches (Schober 2001; see also Doerr 2016). According to Engin Isin (2008), public protests by racialized minorities or migrants are performative acts of citizenship where repressed groups perform "as if" they were full citizens, claiming full citizenship and the end of racist discrimination. We can thus theorize visual gestures of protest as performative, "visibility" acts of citizenship challenging dominant narratives of whiteness embedded in the imaginary of citizenship in particular places, including Europe (cf. El Tayeb 2016; Beaman 2017). Visibility acts of citizenship become relevant strategies of political participation where non-verbal gestures can have a bigger impact than, or complement, verbal statements. However, access to public visibility is not equally distributed.

In the US, the visual repertoire of expression of BLM protests is pluralistic and draws on a long iconographic tradition of protests for racial justice in US social movements (cf. Luna 2017). For example, football player Colin Kaepernick in 2016 performed a dramatic kneeling gesture as part of Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality and racism. Rather than speaking up against police brutality as so many others did, he used the ritualized playing of the national anthem during football games to kneel down, with one knee—in silence. He thus exhibited a dignifying respect to the national anthem, while at the same time protesting the nation's failure to rise to its highest values, represented by the anthem.

Contextualizing Kaepernick's gesture and its visual construction of meaning in the specific U.S. historical context we can think about how Kapernick's public gesture echoes another famous gesture of resistance that was performed during the playing of the national anthem by African-American athletes. These are the 1968 Olympics' champions Tommie Smith (gold medal) and John Carlos (bronze medal), who raised a black-gloved fist, echoing a Black Power gesture, on the podium while the American anthem was playing (due to the fact that Smith won a gold medal, thus honoring the U.S. with the playing of its anthem). Following the protest event, gold medal winner Smith faced harsh professional consequences (Smith 2009). Also in 2016, football player Kaepernick had to pay a high professional price for his protest, as he lost his employment until the time of our writing, while facing ongoing indignation and public stigmatization by conservative political actors. However, Kaepernick's protest also led to a wave of athletes copying his gesture and kneeling before games. In 2020, after the violent killing of George Floyd, and the mass protests that followed in the U.S. and around the world, Kaerpernick's gesture was taken up by activists, and later by police officers and public officials, who used this gesture to communicate complex messages to activists and the public. In a number of capital cities in Europe, police officers of color as well as white officers—kneeled in front of furious and grieving protesters.

We can interpret the varied meanings of public kneeling gestures and their political expression of protest in relation to divergent and yet shared histories of racism in Europe (cf. El Tayeb 2011). Take the example of Germany: During the BLM protests of 2020, German police officers kneeled down together with BLM protesters in the city of Cologne, expressing their solidarity with protesters and remembering the victims of police brutality. This gesture became a dramatic visual protest event only after conservative media outlets reported on local police leadership's outrage over their officers' spontaneous protest. A few days later, liberal and left-leaning media outlets reported that BLM activists in Berlin, who had experienced new police brutality during their own local protests, expressed their moral wish that Berlin police officers would have followed their Cologne colleagues' empathetic performance of kneeling. As visual analysts, it was an empirical puzzle for us to understand the multi-faceted political meaning of the kneeling gesture by police officers, in the specific context of Germany. Drawing on Robin Wagner-Pacifici (2005) , we could interpret the large public attention dedicated to the public kneeling by German police officers as a symbol that can remind us of historic critical political moments in which state officials have expressed their *surrender* as a gesture of expressing humility or the wish for reconciliation toward ethnic minorities as persecuted groups. In her sociological analysis of public performances of surrender by political and military leaders, Wagner-Pacifici (2005) highlights that dramatic public gestures of reconciliation by state officials do not necessarily end conflicts on the issue of racism. This —suggests that symbolic visual politics such as the removal of statues of performances of humility and reconciliation must be followed by institutional change.

A visual analysis perspective thus helps researchers to explore why particular gestures of public protest by BLM activists create dramatic conflict and controversy within a particular national context but not in another national context. For example, what made the kneeling gesture on the part of the Cologne police officers both powerful and controversial within the particular historical context of Germany was the meaning of public kneeling by officials, which we can analyze through visual iconographic analysis. From an iconographic perspective, visual analysts understand images based on preceding images (Müller 2007), and so the kneeling of Cologne police officers formed part of an older, historic, post second World War image tradition where Germany deals with its history of racism and the holocaust (El Tayeb 2016). Thus the Cologne kneeling in 2020 recalls the famous historic kneeling of German

Chancellor Willy Brandt on December 7, 1970, as a gesture of humility, remembrance and honoring of the liquidation of the Warsaw Jewish ghetto, its victims, and the crimes conducted by the Nazi regime during World War II (cf. El Tayeb 2011). At the time, Brandt's kneeling was a powerful symbolic gesture and thus scandalous since it was the first time that a German state leader publicly acknowledged German guilt in Poland—despite conservative political parties at the time taking a critical stands toward Brandt (see, in support of Brandt, Dönhoff 1970). Likewise, in today's context of BLM protests, the kneeling posture by a few German police officers was criticized by high ranking police officials and government representatives in a context where institutions have been reluctant to admit the continuity of systemic racism (El Tayeb 2016; Beaman 2017). Given this reluctance, the kneeling gesture by police officers take an even more powerful transgressive meaning. They point out the potential of another German society, and offer a more self-reflective gesture of acknowledging the presence of structural racism in German institutions today.

Contentious Visual Performances Innovate Public Representations of Citizenship

From a visual analysis perspective, we can also understand how political participation challenges traditional visual *representation* of citizenship and power in the public sphere. In the birth of modern forms of political participation, French revolutionaries toppled publicly displayed statues of the king, and they also demolished and erased the notorious prison building of the Bastille creating a public sphere that symbolized citizens—a new actor entitled to speak politically in public (Schober 2019). Since the French revolution, groups officially excluded from civic rights (e.g. working class people, women, LGBT, or people of color) have used visual performance and iconoclastic acts of protest to attack or remove old power structures in public (Schober 2001; Butler 2015). As visual analysts, we interpret these aesthetic forms of protest, including the wearing of transgressive dress codes by protesters, as performative speech acts in order to extend who can legitimately speak as a citizen (Butler 2015; Doerr 2016). We can thus understand the toppling of statues by the BLM movement as part of that tradition of *contentious repertoires* challenging and contesting the representation of citizenship and power in public spaces (Tilly 1993; Doerr 2010). In an even broader theoretical perspective on the *visibility* of political participation, critical race theorists have shown present day and past racist exclusion of Germans of color, Black people of color and Roma, from ethnic white majority representations of political participation and citizenship in Germany (El Tayeb 2011). Thus, in Germany today, BLM protests themselves are performative speech acts where these groups perform "as if" they were fully recognized (Isin 2008), and through this act of performance challenge the very *space of appearance* and the norms that define how a citizen has to look like in order to speak in public (Butler 2015).

Sociological theories of culture help us to understand the visual and aesthetic power of the practice of toppling controversial public monuments of historic figures. This started in the US and was then diffused to Britain, Denmark, and other European countries, where activists toppled statues they saw as remnants of Europe's history of colonialism and enslavement (Russell 2020). In the US context, protesters tended to topple confederate monuments, which stood for an ongoing tradition of racism and could be seen as cherishing the memory of slavery and slaveholders as "citizen heroes." In the UK, BLM protesters in Bristol attacked, removed, *and* pushed into the Bristol Harbor the statue of slave trader Edward Colston on June 7, 2020 (Russell 2020). We assume that both in the UK and in continental Europe, the toppling of public monuments was a visual expression of local BLM protesters challenging their own countries' intrinsic history of colonialism and enslavement (Tate 2015; Beaman 2017). The protesters attacked what they thought of as traditional monuments standing for citizenship, embodying racism, sexism, or colonialism—and we assume that a visual analysis perspective can give insights to understanding political participation in periods of protests where people challenge traditional monuments in order to reinvent new forms of participation and new ideas about citizenship (Schober 2019).

Take the case of Greenland and Denmark where activists covered the statues of missionary Hans Egede with red paint and marked them with the word "DECOLONIZE". Hans Egede (1686–1758) was a Danish-Norwegian priest who participated in the colonization of Greenland and the forced conversion of its local population. The first protest action performed at a Hans Egede monument took place on Greenland's National Day (June 21, 2020) in Nuuk, Greenland's capital city. The morning following the protest action, the anonymous activists who had painted the Hans Egede statue, issued a statement explaining their motive and rationale. They did so through a Greenlandic artist, Aqqalu Berthelsen, who conveyed their message on their behalf.[1] Ten days later (June 30, 2020) another statue of Egede, this time in the center of Denmark's capital city, Copenhagen, was covered with red paint and inscribed with the word DECOLONIZE (Danish Radio 2020). Following the action in Nuuk, the city conducted a survey among the province's residents regarding the fate of the statue, and a majority voted to keep the statue in its place (Jensen 2020).

The fact that political participation and protest create iconoclastic moments is well known from historic waves of racial justice movements and from post-socialist movements in Western Europe. But the visual expression of BLM went beyond iconoclastic moments: it also implied the creation of new statues. In Bristol, an artist in cooperation with activists temporarily replaced the removed statue of slave trader Colston with a new statue of the local BLM protest leader Jen Reid. The new statue (based on a photograph of Jen Reid standing in front of the now empty plinth and raising her fist) was officially removed a few days later by city officials, who argued that it was not representative of what the citizens of Bristol wanted (Bland 2020). We see here, as in Greenland, counter mobilization that claims to represent the will of the people in keeping the status quo intact. These setbacks notwithstanding, at least in Greenland the protest action did bear some fruit. At the beginning of 2021, the municipality where Nuuk is located announced that it will not celebrate the anniversary of Egede's landing in the island, and instead spend the money on urban renovations in preparation for the upcoming 300th anniversary of the city's founding.

Also, in Denmark, BLM activists whom we interviewed, mentioned the local importance of artists remembering Black heroines of protest such as the art piece "I am Queen Marie" by artists Jeannette Ehlers and La Belle Vaughn in the city center of Copenhagen. This large statue remembers the Danish colonial subject and protest leader Mary Thomas (1848–1905), who received a life sentence, which she partly spent in the women's prison of Christianshavn in Copenhagen. She was incarcerated together with three other Black women protest leaders. In a context of enduring deep political battles against racism, discrimination, and police brutality, the symbolic presence of public monuments of historic Black European citizens or subjects of European colonialism takes a special significance. It plays an important role in making visible the work of racial justice movements in Europe today and connecting it to a long history of Black struggle and pride. We heard this sentiment from a number of activists whom we interviewed. To quote a Copenhagen-based activist engaged in BLM protests:

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[1] Nukappiaaluk Hansen, 2020, "Kunstner hylder vandalisering af statue." *Sermitsiaq*, June 22. https://sermitsiaq.ag/node/222415 . See also Berthelsen's original Facebook post: https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10160627759603868&set=a.10150434785343868&type=3&theater/.

> I think that ALL school children should visit the statue when they visit the capital, so that a little Black Danish girl who lives in a small town somewhere in rural Jutland can go to Copenhagen and see a statue of a woman and she will think "*she looks like me*." (Interviewee #2, November 2020)

In the specific historic context of Denmark, the change of visual aesthetic representations of citizenship in statues is particularly important given the lack of schoolbooks including minorities in the history of political participation (Blågaard 2018). At the same time, sociologists and social movement scholars also point to the limitations of symbolic politics, arguing that the change of visual symbols and statues of citizenship is not enough, and that the same symbols themselves can also be used by counter-movements (Doerr and Teune 2012). For example, barely weeks after the killing of George Floyd, President Trump used a raised fist gesture in his 4th of July speech in front of Mount Rushmore, announcing his willingness to reinstall American civic virtues and historic figures endangered by racial justice protesters, and protect monuments from activists' protest actions (BBC News 2020). Thus, we see how public representations of citizenship and statues of citizen heroes are contested, gain multiple and changing meanings, and can be carried out by opposing claims makers, gaining contradictory meanings in the process.

Media Visibility of Protests

Visual analysis also offers the opportunity to study the visibility of protests and political participation in digital or mainstream media sources. In this section, we show ways to combine text-based frame analysis with visual frame analysis of media debates about protest and political participation. Political participation scholars have recently become attuned to using visual approaches of frame analysis (Luhtakallio 2013) or media frame analysis (Milman 2013). Pictures, portraits, photographs and videos of protest, like media texts, are a key strategy used by protestors to communicate with different audiences, sometimes with ambivalent consequences, given the complex and contentious reception of culturally coded visual frames in pluralist publics (Doerr and Milman 2014).

As part of our case study on BLM protesters in Europe, we combined visual analysis of photographs of BLM protests in the Danish media following the death of George Floyd in May of 2020. Our preliminary findings indicate that visual representations of the BLM protests are embedded in and mirror local discursive contexts and visual traditions of reporting about racial justice and minority politics in a particular national political context such as Denmark. BLM demonstrations in the capital city of Copenhagen and in other large cities attracted unexpectedly large numbers of participants. In the period from May 28 to

July 30, 2020, we identified 25 protest events, including two demonstrations that attracted 2,000–5,000 people, and the largest demonstration on June 7, 2020, with approx. 20,000 participants. These large numbers, including a significant mobilization of white Danes, as well as ethnic minority Danes, exceeded expectations by Danish BLM protest organizers. All of the activists we interviewed in our research mentioned the 2020 BLM mobilization as a turning point in terms of participation and public engagement (Milman et al. 2021).

In terms of combined visual and discursive frame analysis, we found that the BLM mobilization following Floyd's death attracted extensive coverage in the Danish media. Our text-based frame analysis of two widely read Danish newspapers (the conservative *JyllandsPosten* and the liberal *Information*), shows 119 articles published on the protests in Denmark and on the topic of racism in the two months we studied. Our visual frame analysis shows that many of the photographs representing the movement and its leaders reflected racialized representations. For example, the often-negative portrayal of the movement in text-based article contents was accompanied by press photography using close shots of one protest leader, Bwalya Sørensen, portraying her in the stereotype of the "angry black woman." As Milman has shown, the angry black woman stereotype is a known negative portrayal of African Americans and Latino women in US conservative and negative media coverage of minority social justice protests in the United States (Milman 2013). In our interviews with BLM activists from Denmark, activists reflected on the problem that media visibility of the movement was replicating racializing stereotypes of Black women, thus minimizing the opportunities for political participation of traditionally underrepresented voices within media debate. As one of the interviewees said, "[M]edia images and reports have been brutal, shaming and deeply antagonist" (Interviewee #2, November 2020). At the same time, one must be attuned to the differences in representation across news outlets. Tabloids used an openly shaming outraged tone in their coverage of minority voices. In a more nuanced style, the more liberal quality newspapers such as the left-wing daily newspaper *Information* gave more voice to minorities. Still, out of 32 direct quotes in all articles in our sample, over 50 percent of quotes were by white people while less than one third were by minorities. In addition, activists and politicians received the same amount of direct quotes (21 percent for each), a figure that contrasts with the much smaller percentage of activist voices in reporting about immigration and the European "refugee crisis" we further discuss in detail here.

Regarding the visibility of protesters' claims-making on the issue of racism, our text-based media frame analysis, overlapping with our interviews with BLM activists, shows a tendency among journalists and op-ed writers, to deny the issue of structural racism existing in Denmark. The majority of articles was based on the perception that racism is something that happens "there" —in the US, and not "at home," in liberal Denmark. In a context in which racism is denied, Danish BLM leaders' decision to have black people lead their marches, for example, led to a reproach by the media and some politicians and to accusations of the movement for being racist ("reverse racism").[2] Similarly, an ice cream company's decision to replace its ice cream's name "Eskimo," a word which is both scientifically inaccurate and is used as a slur against Indigenous populations, led to a fervent debate. This and other cultural changes demanded by the BLM movement in Denmark led some media articles to problematize the emergence of a liberal, "hysteric," and politically correct "cancel culture" or an "easily offended culture" that was un-Danish and was in itself intolerant.[3] Thus, the triangulation of interview data with visual and text-based data helps scholars to understand the (in)visibility of particular social or political groups in media reporting of political participation and protest events.

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[2] See for example: Jacob Haislund, 2020. "Black Lives Matter får kritik for at skelne mellem sorte og hvide." *Jyllands-Posten*, October 23.

Another example on how to integrate visual analysis within traditional, text-based frame analysis of media debates is Milman's ongoing research of Danish national media debates on immigration in the aftermath of the 2015 "refugee crisis." In the summer and autumn of 2015, as Milman's media frame analysis shows, Danish newspapers debated immigration alongside the predominant frame of immigrants as posing a "threat." The threat frame was dominant in 247 newspaper articles out of 537 articles coded; that is, 46 percent of all sampled articles from four predominant national news outlets (the newspapers *Politiken*, *Jyllands Posten*, *Ekstra Bladet*, and the popular online news platform of *Danish Radio*). Journalists connected their framing of immigration as a threat to the implicit or sometimes explicit assumption that immigrants were "flooding" Denmark and Europe. Articles framed the assumption of immigrants as posing a threat to Denmark, using cultural, economic, or security-related constructions of threat.

Milman's visual analysis of media discourse complements and deepens the text-based analysis. The images that accompanied these text-based news articles, especially in September 2015, when many asylum seekers arrived to Europe, show a visual representation of the (archaic) fear of a country being run over and flooded by threatening newcomers or "Others," a classic trope in anti-immigration debates in Europe today (Wodak 2015). Many of the images showed masses of people, often pictured from the back, thus not having a human face to identify with. One particular image trope showed a mass of asylum seekers literally running over barriers put up by the police, and storming forward in the Macedonian border. This imagery, published broadly by all Danish newspapers at the end of February 2016,[4] is concretely expressing and representing the implicit argument in much of the text-based media coverage, that Europeans, and Danes in particular, are being overrun by immigrants. Still, other images did depict specific asylum seekers. These were often depictions as part of a larger group, but sometimes these were individual portraits.

Another noteworthy finding of Milman's visual analysis is that most of the press images depicting specific migrants focused on parents (both mothers and fathers) with their children, who were often visibly shaken or in distress. Interpreting Milman's findings from the perspective of Anna Schober's visual theory of political participation, we assume that the frequent use of photographs of immigrant children in Danish media helped liberal audiences to humanize migrants, and recognize themselves in the children portrayed. Thus, it collectively served the purpose of developing a moral position, for example, conceiving a need for humanitarian action (Schober 2019). This visual framing focus on family and parenting stands in curious contrast to the textual representation of asylum seekers in the news. For example, there was a surprisingly low representation of children in the context of immigration in the written texts. The humanizing function of the children's images did not extend to the texts, thus creating a bifurcated moral response to—and in—media debates.

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[3] See for example the opinion pieces: Anders Næsby, 26.10.2020. "Krænkelseskulturen kvæler os." *Jyllands-Posten,* June 16; Niels Barrett, 2020. "Politisk korrekthed i overgear." *Information*, June 17.

[4] See, for example, E. Ingoversen, 2016. "Se billederne: Flygtninge stormer grænse." Ekstra Bladet, February 29; N.A. 2016. "EU er meget bekymret over uro ved grænsen til Makedonien." *DR*, March 1.

Another important finding regarding the in/visibility of political participation is that there was a glaring absence of immigrants' voices in the text of newspaper articles. From a sample of 537 articles that cover the topic of immigration in Denmark from 2015 to the end of 2019, only 3 percent of the articles contained a direct quote by a migrant, refugee, or asylum seeker. Given the lack of voice migrants had in shaping the debate on immigration, their visual representation holds much more power, as it is one of the few forms of visibility they garnered in public discourse. Still, this representation, too, was not shaped by the immigrants themselves. They were the objects rather than the subjects of storytelling, and they were not invited to influence or express their view on the political decision-making on asylum, which would most dramatically affect their lives. Among all speakers featured in debates about asylum in Denmark, civil society and activists who were involved in solidarity with refugees were also a minority, with only 7 percent of the articles, while 28 percent of the articles included a quote by a politician. Summing up, from a political participation perspective the combination of visual and text-based frame analysis shows the invisibility of immigrant voices and immigrants' political participation in national public debate in Denmark.

Very few images portrayed immigrants in interaction with Danish citizens, with the exception of Danish police officers. However, Danish police officers, too, were often pictured from the back or as part of a mass of people. This stands in contrast to a series of images that became iconic in Denmark and internationally picturing a Danish police officer gently interacting with a child.[5] The iconic series of images portrayed a male police officer sitting in the middle of a blocked highway in Denmark, and affectionately playing with a cheerful asylum-seeking girl from Iraq. This image drew a lot of attention in public debates (see also Olesen 2020). Unlike the many other images in the Danish news in September 2015, this image focused on one particular immigrant, one particular cop, and their unique, and positive, interaction. Still, like many of the other photographs in our sample, this picture focused on a child, not an adult, and thus, it can be interpreted as a mirror image, which helps media audiences to construct a moral position—presumably because children elicit more sympathy from viewers (cf. Schober 2019). Milman's data suggest that this image became iconic in the Danish context exactly because it was a sharp departure from the other images of threat and subsequent harsh response that circulated in the Danish immigration debate. By images of threat, we here refer to visual as well as textual images which portrayed immigrants as a threat, and the Danish state (represented often, as in this case, by police officers) as unwelcoming to immigrants.

Milman's argument is that the positive photography of a police officer and a young asylum-seeker girl resonated strongly with the Danish public and even received a photography award because it had the potential to restore the Danish image. In other words, both outwardly (as Denmark was heavily criticized by the international community), and in Denmark itself, the photography resonated with a wish to present Denmark as a moral nation and a pillar of humanitarian and human rights work—true to its (past) image in the world (Ersen and

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[5] Shot in September 9, 2015 by freelance photographer Michael Drost-Hansen and published in the Danish daily *Jyllands-Posten* on September 10, 2015. Freelance photographer Claus Fisker took a series of very similar photographs at the scene that can be viewed online. Drost-Hansen's photograph won the 2015 News Photograph of the Year award in Denmark (Olesen 2020).

Madsen 2011). What made the image stand out is the reversal with respect to other images; both in spirit—openness to refugees, and style—close-up of individuals—that together created an image of a positive interaction between Danes and asylum seekers. By doing so, it had the potential to rebrand the self-image of a nation as humanitarian and good. Still, the image itself, and the fascination with it, only highlighted the fact that this was the exception rather than the rule. It is also important to note that the reception of this image was mixed, as some people expressed their dislike for the police officer playing with a child in the middle of the road, instead of protecting social order and opening the road (Olesen 2020). Given the increased relevance of visual types of digital media for protest (Doerr 2017), the combined study of images in visual materials and "images in the text" promises to deepen the analysis of political participation scholars.

Sociologists doing frame analysis also have included images in their quantitative analysis. For example, Milman's previous media frame analysis combined content and visual qualitative approaches to document how journalists covering minority women's protests pretended to be neutral in giving the same amount of voice to different groups yet referred to ethnic, gendered, and cultural stereotypes to de-legitimate resistance by stigmatized populations (Milman 2013; Doerr and Milman 2014). Most recently, researchers have developed models to use theoretical insights from social science based visual analysis in combination with computer science big data analysis in order to study digital visual forms of far-right political participation (Hokka and Nelimarkka 2020). A remaining challenge in visual social science data analysis is that the coding of visual data may reflect the researchers' culturally and socially distinct positionality (Rose 2006), which suggests the need for further collaborative research between social scientists and computer scientists.

Conclusion

In a social world that relies ever more so on images for communication, political mobilization, and political action, it is necessary for researchers to study the visual aspects of political participation. By doing so, we are better able to capture the complexities of political participation in this current moment. In this chapter, we have presented visual analysis based on its interdisciplinary theoretical discussion as an established research tradition in the humanities, in international relations, political science, and sociology. We have discussed three approaches for doing visual analysis empirically, that is, the analysis of visual forms of expression, representation, and the public visibility of political participation. Although distinct, all three areas are connected, and we have proposed three steps in conducting visual analysis: First, visual content analysis, second, iconographic interpretation, and third, the contextualization of images through the use of additional text-based, interpretative approaches of visual analysis. Each of these steps is essential for conducting a critical visual analysis that contributes to the study of political participation. We have highlighted that neither visual methods nor text-based, interpretative methods alone help us understand the complex political and cultural messages that we find in images diffused online via mainstream and social media. We demonstrated our theoretical claims by focusing on the example of videos, gestures, and contentious performances diffused and used by BLM activists in the US and Europe, and by studying media reporting on BLM and refugees in the case of

Denmark. As we have tried to show through the examples we studied, images are an important resource for political actors to express themselves. Moreover, visual methods also advance the importance of interdisciplinary work consolidating the sociological and political science approaches to political participation research (see Introduction chapter). If images of participation affect audiences and target groups, any analysis of political processes and any approaches focusing on the public sphere are well advised to consider the visual aspects of the political acts they are studying.

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CHAPTER 20

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AND THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

MARCELLE C. DAWSON

With an emphasis on active participation by ordinary people in making change, participatory action research (PAR) is now a well-established methodological tradition in the social sciences. Once regarded as a heretical approach to knowledge production, PAR is now commonplace among researchers committed to the pursuit of social justice. Tomes have been written about the philosophy and practice of PAR across a range of social sciences, notably the work of Orlando Fals Borda, Sara Kindon, Robin McTaggart, Peter Reason, and their collaborators (Fals-Borda 1969, 1985, 1987, 1991, 2001; Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991; Kindon, Pain, and Kesby, 2007; McTaggart, Nixon, and Kemmis 2017; Reason 1979, 1994; Reason and Bradbury 2001). This chapter reviews a selection of this literature, partly to take stock of how far we have come, but also to identify new opportunities to advance the mutually beneficial relationship between scholarly research, political participation, and social change.

Political participation by ordinary social actors continues to capture the attention of social scientists from a wide range of disciplines. Specifically, political sociologists and social movement scholars have sought to understand the agency and political subjectivities of the most marginalized members of society. Amid growing concerns that "parachute-style" research had a disempowering effect on the communities it proposed to uplift, there was a turn in the 1970s towards more participatory modes of research that saw a change in the language from research "subjects" or "informants" to "participants." This shift went hand-in-hand with involving participants on an equal footing right from inception of the project, rather than at the point of data collection, application of findings, and/or policy implementation.

Participatory Action Research (PAR), as this new approach came to be called, recognized the importance of embeddedness, experiential knowledge, and local insights in shaping meaningful change. Ordinary social actors began to be viewed as active producers of knowledge, who had both the desire and ability to shape their own futures, rather than being treated as passive, data-rich sources ready to be mined. More recently, we have witnessed yet another turn in scholarship—a U-turn perhaps—that has revived the interest in and uptake of Indigenous approaches to research and knowledge production.

In addressing the central tenets of PAR, this chapter embraces an expanded definition of political participation; one that accepts everyday politics as a legitimate site for the development of contemporary political subjectivities. The term, "political subjectivity," is used here to capture how people understand their ordinary political acts or "mundane political agency," which Häkli and Kallio (2018: 57) define as "agency based on the capacity of human beings to carry out acts that are undetermined and unexpected, and thus capable of challenging, opposing, negotiating, maintaining, and readjusting prevailing conditions." Political subjectivity captures the intricate interplay between personal and social factors that shape how social actors interpret the world and also how they act on the world by expressing their voices, becoming visible, and gaining recognition from those in power (Krause and Schramm 2011). It is simultaneously a product of critical self-reflection and human interaction (Abrams 2015; Blackman et al. 2008; Häkli and Kallio 2018). Capturing—in a scientifically rigorous manner—the seemingly mundane behaviors that constitute political acts requires a methodological approach that can accurately grasp the ways in which ordinary people navigate power.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH: CENTRAL TENETS AND THEORETICAL ROOTS

Amid growing concern in the 1970s that the detached, supposedly objective, methods of the positivist tradition did not adequately equip social scientists to explain the lived realities of the most marginalized groups in society, some researchers—notably in fields like sociology, anthropology, adult education, and geography—began to reconsider the right to, and extent of, "involvement" in the research process. The impetus for this shift came from the realization that the inadequate and sometimes deleterious conclusions drawn from research were often rooted in the starting assumptions of orthodox social science. The view that the social world could be understood through the discovery of universal truths and objective realities that existed independently of humans, denied that people are largely "self-determining" beings (Heron 1981), who—within limits—are "the authors of their own actions" (Reason 1994: 325). Recognizing the shortcomings of social research that treated people either as subjects about whom stories were told by expert others, or as objects whose behavior could be manipulated, a handful of social scientists began to pioneer methods that centered human agency, with the aim of establishing a mutually rewarding partnership between those involved in social inquiry (Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991; Fals-Borda 2001; Reason 1979, 1994; Tandon 1982). Orlando Fals-Borda—widely regarded as the founder of action research (later, participatory action research) —was at pains to point out that participation was not about "inviting peasants to collect information in the service of research" (Rappaport 2020). Instead, as Rappaport (2020: 8) succinctly states, Fals-Borda and his fellow researchers saw participation as "the simultaneous insertion of a research team into a broader social movement and the intervention of the popular organization in the research project itself . . . it is a reciprocal process in which popular and scientific knowledge are intertwined with a political goal in mind."

Early adopters of participatory research methods challenged the assumption of a hierarchical, quantitative difference in the skill level between "researcher" and "research subjects." For them, such thinking immediately imbued the research context with a power imbalance, the outcome of which was that researchers invariably had the last and biggest say over matters that were likely to concern them the least. PAR advocates sought to draw attention to the unique vantage point that ordinary social actors brought to the project by virtue of their lived experience and local knowledge of their own communities (Heron 1996; Heron and Reason 1997; Reason 1994; McTaggart, Nixon, and Kemmis 2017). They made a conscious effort to shift away from the language of research "subjects" towards treating all those involved as valued research "participants" *for* whom and *by* whom research was done, and whose contributions—right from the inception of a research project—were critical to the process. These new trends in social inquiry signaled the birth of *participatory* action research (PAR) (Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991).

Despite some differences in the range of approaches that stemmed from a shared disdain for scientific orthodoxy (Chevalier and Buckles 2019; Reason 1994), there are significant overlaps in participatory methodological styles, given their "emancipatory," "collaborative," "engaged," "cooperative," and 'transformative" agendas (Fals-Borda 2001; Heron 1996; Zuber Skerrit 1996). Common theoretical influences and core principles serve as centripetal forces that draw diverse PAR approaches together. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to distinguish between all the different approaches that fall within the realm of participatory modes of research, or to offer an exhaustive account of the theoretical underpinnings of PAR. Instead, the discussion identifies some of the main intellectual traditions that have shaped the development of PAR, with the aim of highlighting the continued relevance of this methodological approach for the study of political participation. Humanist philosophy and liberation theology reverberate strongly in PAR's abiding concern with the politics of knowledge production and the recognition that there are many ways of knowing (Hall 1985; Rahman 1991; Reason 1994; Kindon, Pain, and Kesby 2007; Santos 2007, 2014, 2018).

Recognizing multiple epistemologies depends heavily on the ability to communicate in ways that are familiar to local communities. Fals-Borda explained how this process unfolded in the early days of PAR approaches:

> Besides establishing a rigorous pertinent science, we also wanted to pay attention to ordinary people's knowledge … we discarded our learned jargon so as to communicate with everyday language even with plurivocal means; and we tried innovative cognitive procedures like doing research work with collectivities and local groups so as to lay sound foundations for their empowerment. (Fals-Borda 2001: 28)

The idea of "bring[ing] about a convergence between popular thought and academic sciences" (Fals-Borda 2001: 29) might seem unremarkable in the social sciences today. However, at its inception, PAR was considered radical in that it challenged some of the key tenets of the Enlightenment period. It sought to legitimize sources of knowledge that previously had gone unnoticed or had been dismissed as worthless or irrelevant. Through PAR, different voices began to be acknowledged and amplified, including the voices of women, Indigenous communities, and other marginalized groups that had largely been excluded from political representation and spaces of political participation. Given its intention to uncover the relationship between power and knowledge, PAR has a great deal to offer researchers who are interested in politics in general and in the study of political participation in particular.

PAR's interest in disrupting power imbalances, both within the research context and in society more broadly, is rooted in its affinity with critical theory and feminism (Hall 1992; Fine and Torre 2019; Kindon, Pain, and Kesby 2007). Guided by the goal of achieving "a relation of dialogue between social elements, all of whom have to be treated as equals" (Rahman and Fals-Borda 1991: 22), PAR practitioners seek to work in a collaborative fashion by valuing the diverse contributions of all those involved. All PAR participants are recognized as skilled and knowledgeable contributors whose (sometimes contradictory) insights are integral to shaping the direction and outcomes of research.

The key to PAR's potential to subvert conventional research—and what distinguishes it from other modes of qualitative research on political participation—is its desire to disrupt the subject/object binary and establish in its place a subject/subject relationship (Fals-Borda 1991). For Fals-Borda (1991: 5), "the destruction of the asymmetric bionomial is the kernel of the concept of participation as understood in the present context (researcher/researched) and in other aspects of the *daily* routine (family, health, education, politics and so forth)" (emphasis added). The genius of Fals-Borda's claim lies in the recognition that participation is not merely a mechanism to alter the dynamics of the research context: it is a tool for social, political, and epistemological emancipation more broadly. Other renowned PAR advocates have reiterated the idea of dismantling the subject/object binary. For instance, Heron and Reason 1997; 284) argued that "the researchers are also the subjects and … the subjects are also the researchers. The coresearchers are also the cosubjects. The research is done by people with each other, not by researchers on other people or about them." This shift away from the positivist assumption of researcher objectivity suggests that involvement at every stage of the enquiry by those who may have to live with the proposed outcomes of research is a non-negotiable aspect of PAR (McTaggart 1997). As such, PAR has an advantage over other methods in that it allows for shifts in thought and action *while* political participation is underway, rather than after the fact or in anticipation of future political involvement. It accepts that reflecting critically on thoughts and actions and altering praxis accordingly constitute everyday political acts, or what Häkli and Kallio (2018) call, "the political ordinary." In other words, PAR begins with the critical assumption that political participation acts upon the actors too, transforming their worldview and enhancing their capacity as agents of change. Thus, what PAR offers to the study of political participation is a response to Marx's final thesis on Feuerbach in which he urged philosophers to go beyond interpretation of the world and seek, instead, to change it. All those involved in PAR are agents of change and are, themselves, transformed in the process through a collaborative effort in which different skill sets and modes of knowing are brought together in ways that offer novel angles on an issue. Hence, PAR is not merely an approach that can be employed in the study of political participation. Instead, it is a form of political participation itself, in that it harbors transformative potential, not only for the material realities of research participants, but also for their political subjectivities (Kesby, Kindon, and Pain 2007; Tolman and Brydon-Miller 2001; Watson 2019).

Beyond shared theoretical and philosophical roots, PAR approaches quite literally are concerned with a "commitment to fully integrating the core elements built into the acronym, namely Participation (life in society), Action (experience) and Research (knowledge making)" (Chevalier and Buckles 2019: 14). As such, PAR promotes transformation through a fluid, cyclical, and interconnected process of successive planning, action, and critical reflection (McTaggart, Nixon, and Kemmis 2017). PAR practitioners, guided by the lived experience of their participants, are exposed to the ways in which inequities are socially manufactured and reinforced, both by structural factors *and* through everyday, interpersonal encounters. Consequently, PAR practitioners are ideally placed to develop the language and the intellectual tools to see through the eyes of the other. There are as many descriptions of PAR as there are practitioners, but one of the most compelling definitions remains the one penned by Reason (1994: 329), in that it captures the *substance* rather than the mechanics of PAR:

> PAR values the people's knowledge, sharpens their capacity to conduct their own research in their own interests, helps them appropriate knowledge produced by the dominant knowledge industry for their own interests and purposes, allows problems to be explored from their perspective, and, maybe most important, liberates their minds for critical reflection, questioning, and the continuous pursuit of inquiry, thus contributing to the liberation of their minds and the development of freedom and democracy.

Guided by principles and philosophies that center liberation and empowerment, and employing techniques that emphasize everyday human action and interaction, PAR encourages researchers to lend more weight to the ways in which ordinary people make sense of their daily reality, for it is in these seemingly mundane acts that power is exercised, challenged, transferred, and transformed. Power—and thus politics—is everywhere; it thrives in the everyday spaces where ordinary people go about the minutiae of their day.

PAR, EVERYDAY POLITICS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Much of the scholarship on political behavior is dominated by research on political polls, voting behavior, election results, and other forms of political action, including strikes, demonstrations, attending political meetings, and street politics, and these studies tend to rely on quantitative data to make their case (see for instance, Giugni and Grasso 2019a, 2019b; Shorter and Tilly 1974). This research contributes enormously to our understanding of the scope and nature of political participation, not only in terms of broad, macro-level patterns of behavior, but also in respect of micro-level factors such as motivations, emotions, perceived effectiveness, and feelings of trust in political institutions. However, survey data is limited in its ability to capture aspects of political subjectivity, including actors' reflexive feelings about how they are affected—and perhaps even transformed—by the process of engaging in political action. Arguably, more clarity around how and why political participation matters to the actors themselves, how it shapes their understanding of who they are, and also how they use their political agency to effect social change may help to address mounting concerns over the so-called "democratic" or "civics deficit" (Fyfe 2009; Harris et al. 2007). The civics deficit is reflected in declining voter turnout and in the recognition that young people, in particular, are showing a lack of interest in the subject of politics (Boyte 2004;

Wood 2012). Research on the civics deficit revealed a sense of "citizen powerlessness" (Boyte 2004: 9), which was hardly surprising, given widely held views that politics:

> is about government and world trade agreements and the United Nations' peace-keeping forces; it is about ethnic or religious genocide and world tribunals; it is about apartheid and global capitalism, money laundering and linguistic imperialism. It is about the inequities between the political North and the political South. It is about oil, the ozone layer, genetic engineering and cloning. It is about the danger of global warming. It is about globalisation, the new work order and sweat shops in Asia. (Janks 2010: 188)

When politics is conceived in this way, it is not hard to see why many people feel overwhelmed. The feeling that their efforts are futile renders them politically inert or wholly inactive when it comes to political participation. However, the definition above captures only one dimension of politics, which Janks (2010) refers to as capital *P* politics. Focusing on the realm of "Politics" as the only site of legitimate political participation blinds us to the power-laden actions of ordinary people that occur in the mundane spaces of their everyday lives. It is in this realm of everyday politics that PAR can be most effective at explaining why political participation matters to people, and how the meaning that they attribute to their involvement shapes their ability to effect social change. It is to the question of everyday politics that the discussion now turns.

Boyte, in his research on the growing disinterest in politics among Americans, advocated for a rethinking of politics that captured the ordinary ways in which "a society as a whole negotiates, argues about, and understands its past and creates its present and its future" (2004: 1). This expansive understanding of politics recognizes that people have "many settings for interaction and engagement with each other across lines of difference, beyond elections alone" (Boyte 2004: 1). It takes more seriously the "micro-politics of everyday life" (Janks 2010: 188), which includes the routine choices and decisions that shape our identities, our relationships with each other, and our engagements with power structures within and beyond formal political institutions. The inclusion of such behaviors encourages us to recognize the legitimacy of the family, schools, shopping malls, the workplace, and so on, as sites of political participation. For instance, political consumerism, or quite simply voting with one's wallet (Micheletti 2003; Mukherjee and Banet-Weiser 2012), is an everyday practice that gives ordinary people the power to decide how to spend their money (see Chapter 25 of this volume for a discussion on political consumerism and lifestyle activism). Whether or not such acts form part of large-scale consumer boycotts designed to undermine the economy, they nonetheless constitute a form of political participation that gives ordinary people a sense of political agency. It gives them a sense of ownership over social change that is lacking in "Politics." Widening the lens on politics to include the realm of everyday life makes visible "the politics of identity and place" and allows researchers to capture "small triumphs and defeats" (Janks 2010: 188). Political acts in the spaces of everyday life constitute "little *p* politics" (Janks 2010: 188), which underscores the feminist maxim that the personal is indeed political. Häkli and Kallio (2018: 64) offer a definition of politics that encapsulates these everyday acts: "Politics … is a manifestly human condition, a ceaseless negotiation of the ways of living together that employs the capacities for human agency, such as attentiveness, reflexivity, affectivity, improvisation, interrogation, and the production of change."

If we accept this definition, it follows that the study of political participation within the realm of "little *p* politics" requires an approach that values the ways in which ordinary people make meaning and engage with power in their everyday lives. PAR offers such an approach. In contrast to quantitative approaches, PAR encourages the sharing of locally derived, context-specific meanings that enable social actors to claim authorship over their own political subjectivities, rather than be categorized by researchers as conforming or belonging to a particular category of "political animal" by virtue of their political choices or behaviors. In other words, as an approach to the study of political participation, PAR is less interested in the objective political behavior displayed by people at particular, politically significant moments, such as elections, strikes, or mass protests, for example. Instead, PAR seeks to explain how people experience and make sense of their everyday political acts, for it is through these acts that people become aware of their political agency and claim ownership over the decisions that affect their lives. Understood in these terms, PAR is well suited to the study of small *p* political participation.

Non-electoral and extra-parliamentary politics—while possibly a novel terrain for orthodox political scientists—are the mainstay of scholars of social movements and some political sociologists. Social movement studies—as a subdiscipline of sociology—is, at its core, concerned with social change. It follows, then, that PAR—a method that emphasizes the active involvement by ordinary people in effecting social change—is particularly well suited to political participation that occurs at the margins. Having said that, it is worth pointing out that much of the seminal research on social movements and popular protest has signaled the importance of using large data sets for the sake of making comparisons and establishing patterns in political participation that occurs outside the parameters of conventional, electoral and parliamentary politics (Giugni 1998; Giugni and Grasso 2019b; Kriesi et al. 1995; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Stephan and Chenoweth 2008; Tarrow 1989; Tilly and Tarrow 2006). While this work, which stems largely from political science, is valuable for understanding social movements, it represents only one way of examining extra-parliamentary and non-electoral political participation.

A different approach, which centers on the ways in which ordinary people articulate and negotiate their political subjectivities, is embedded within disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, and cognate fields, where the interpretive–constructivist paradigm is commonplace. This methodological stance assumes that "the world we live in and our place in it are not simply and evidently 'there' for participants," and that "participants actively construct the world of everyday life and its constituent elements" (Gubrium and Holstein 2008: 3). PAR offers a range of techniques to researchers who are concerned with the active construction of political worlds and meanings as a particular form of political participation. Unlike other qualitative techniques, such as semi-structured interviews or focus groups, where researchers rely on participants' memories, aspirations, and subjective accounts of their involvement in political action, PAR allows the researcher to get a tangible sense of participants' experiences *in situ*. Thus, PAR has an edge over other qualitative techniques in that researchers—who are themselves legitimate participants—can draw on their own and others' first-hand experiences to offer a nuanced account of political participation.

Since PAR does not rely on a contrived research situation where researchers and participants must find a mutually suitable time *outside* of political participation to engage in a conversation *about* political participation, the research process itself is an everyday activity. Seen in this light, narrative methods, including storytelling, are an important means of data elicitation in PAR. Unlike semi-structured interviews or focus groups, where participants are prompted by the researcher, conversations that happen in the context of

PAR are more natural, given that they occur in the course of participants' everyday political behavior Kindon, Pain, and Kesby (2007). In other words, naturally occurring conversations precede and continue to unfold beyond what is typically recognized in the conventional research process as "fieldwork." Polletta's (2006) account of storytelling in protest and politics is particularly insightful for this discussion. She challenged the idea that storytelling is intrinsically beneficial for marginalized political actors who can elicit sympathy and garner support for their cause by telling their stories in their own voices. Polletta (2006) identified several unintended consequences of storytelling, not least of which is that those in power—despite being sympathetic—may not be willing to act in ways that might alter the material realties of those doing the storytelling out of a desire or pressure to protect their own privilege. Moreover, potential allies who do not want to be pitied may be repelled by attempts to garner sympathy (Polletta 2006). Given that participatory action researchers are part of the interaction context where political participation occurs, they are in a much better position than interviewers or focus group moderators to pick up on these kinds of nuances in narrative accounts of political participation.

In her work on work on anti-racist teaching—a form of little *p* politics—Bell (2020) distinguishes between "stock stories" or the stories that we tell ourselves that tend to reproduce inequalities; "concealed stories," which are those that are hidden or suppressed by dominant narratives; "resistance stories" or bottom-up stories of struggle that speak truth to power; and "emerging or transformative stories," which unfold in everyday spaces and provide an opportunity to recognize and challenge inequalities that are woven into the fabric of everyday life and are, thus, hegemonic. Drawing on these different types of stories, and advancing Harris et al's (2000) work on counter stories, Bell (2020) emphasizes the importance of "cultivating a counter-storytelling community" that aims "to reveal what has been left out, suppressed, misunderstood and ignored" (Bell 2020: 3). Again, the embeddedness of participatory action researchers in the communities where they conduct research places them in an ideal position to foster and contribute to storytelling that not only disrupts dominant narratives, but also imagines alternative futures that are rooted in the lived experiences of participants. Thus, PAR does not merely provide a platform for people to tell their stories. It foregrounds the agency of those involved in everyday forms of political participation.

The discussion here has focused on storytelling, which is just one of the methods in PAR's repertoire. A similar technique takes the form of oral histories, but beyond narrative enquiry, PAR also uses visual methods such as art, theatre, photo-elicitation, and photovoice. These methods afford participants the opportunity to make sense of their worlds in the medium that they are most comfortable with. Visual methods have the added advantage of transcending language barriers, which is particularly useful when participants do not have a language in common or are limited in their verbal abilities (for a detailed consideration of visual methods in the study of political participation, see Chapter 19 of this volume). While these methods are not the exclusive preserve of PAR practitioners, they are used more frequently in PAR than in other modes of qualitative research, because their intention is to facilitate a more even distribution of power between participants in the research process, which is a key objective of PAR.

Collaborative styles of research that treat participants as equal contributors and co-producers of knowledge are especially important for scholar-activists (Arribas Lozano 2018; Banks et al. 2019; Barker and Cox 2002; Dawson and Sinwell 2012). In seeing participants as "intellectual partners" (Holmes and Marcus 2008: 83), PAR challenges the relationship between university-based researchers and community actors by rupturing the idea that academics are "knowledge-producers," while those outside the academy are "knowledge-users" (Barker and Cox 2002: 1). Moreover, given its capacity to appreciate fluidity, unpredictability, and contradiction, PAR as an approach to studying social movements guards against "treat[ing] what are, precisely, *movements* as static 'fields' " (Barker and Cox 2002: 2, emphasis in original).

The discussion above has examined the value of participatory methods for the study of political participation that occurs in mundane spaces of life, that is, little *p* politics. This idea is analogous to Scott's (1990) notions of "hidden transcripts" and "infrapolitics," which contain political acts that lie beyond the public gaze. The suite of methods associated with PAR can reveal political acts that may otherwise go unnoticed. As such, the value of PAR for studying political participation is two-fold: it provides us with the tools to study everyday variants of political participation, and—if employed appropriately—broadens our understanding of what constitutes political participation. Let's take, for example, the mundane lived realities of undocumented migrants, many of whom are excluded from political participation. Their lives are nevertheless integral to the everyday politics of the communities in which they reside, because their mere presence in the community shapes the lived experience, and therefore the political subjectivities, of all others in that community. For many migrants, being excluded from political participation is often the result of a range of interrelated factors, including language barriers, status of belonging, intentional invisibility, inadvertent marginalization or forced exclusion. Disqualification from political participation, for whatever reason, has significant implications for survival and political agency. Many migrants miss out on access to resources, such as housing, education, transport, and/or healthcare, and are denied the opportunity to shape community affairs. Francisco's (2014) research on Filipino migrant workers in the United States of America shows how PAR techniques have the potential to subvert political marginality by "assert[ing] migrants' lived experiences as 'expertise' ". Indeed, Francisco's work offers a contemporary example of PAR's ability to ignite the sociological imagination (Mills 1959). Her participants had the opportunity to "recount their own experience and begin to understand that those individual stories are part of a larger story of forced migration, labor export policy, and low-wage work" (Francisco 2014; 78). By having their voices count, the migrant domestic workers were able to connect "private troubles" to "public issues."

Despite initial disdain for PAR, it gradually became commonplace in policy and research circles. However, as critics noted, participation was not intended as a magic bullet that could be discharged to obliterate inequality. Responding to the co-optation of the language of "participation" by the international development agenda, Cooke and Kothari (2001) produced an insightful account of the ways in which top-down changes in the name of "empowerment" thwarted genuine development. Mosse, in the same volume, argued that local knowledge is not always the driving force behind the development agenda nor is it necessarily rooted in the desires of the community. Indeed, he pointed out that in many instances, local knowledge is a product of predetermined planning and development agendas. In an effort to avoid the pitfalls identified by critics, PAR practitioners—partly influenced by the recent decolonial turn within the academy—have developed an interest in, or renewed their commitment to, Indigenous approaches to research. The final section of this chapter addresses the intersection between PAR and Indigenous research methods and briefly considers the implications of the decolonial turn for the study of political participation.

INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES, PAR AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

In her groundbreaking work, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999), Linda Tuhiwai Smith examined how academic disciplines and scholarly research have upheld the colonization agenda in the form of epistemic imperialism. She also explained how the research undertakings of, by and for Indigenous communities could challenge this form of imperialism. In the context of New Zealand, such an approach is called Kaupapa Māori research (or the Māori research agenda/philosophy), which Bishop (1999: 2) defined as "an approach that challenges the locus of power and control over the research issues of initiation, benefits, representation, legitimation and accountability . . . being located in another cultural frame of reference/world view." As such, "the Kaupapa Māori approach to research is the operationalisation of self-determination (*tino Rangatiratanga*) by Māori people" (Bishop 1999: 2).

The key tenets of PAR as discussed in this chapter are writ large in Kaupapa Māori and other Indigenous approaches to research. Indeed, one could argue that Indigenous communities had been engaging in successive cycles of planning, action, and critical self-reflection long before terms like PAR or research methodologies came along! The naming (and subsequent claiming) by the academy of age-old processes of learning from one's actions and acting upon these lessons could perhaps be regarded as predatory, notwithstanding the good intentions of PAR. In their work on cross-cultural collaborative research, Hepi et al. (2007: 44) suggested that a productive research alliance—like the one that PAR strives to achieve, where the subject/subject relationship replaces a subject/object relationship—must begin by establishing a partnership in which the roles of "teacher and learner are interchangeable". Achieving a partnership of mutual exchange is a logical extension of the word, *ako* in te reo Māori (the language of New Zealand's Indigenous people), which bears the dual meaning of "to teach" and "to learn." The point here is not that Indigenous methodologies are inherently participatory or that Indigenous researchers are, by nature, collaborative. Instead, each research encounter needs to be carefully (re-)negotiated in order to foster knowledge co-production and nurture a mutually supportive, durable relationship.

In responding to concerns that social justice research is often conducted "on" or "about" Indigenous communities without their involvement, but ostensibly for their benefit, Denzin and Lincoln (2008: 2) proposed a "critical indigenous pedagogy [which] values the transformative power of indigenous, subjugated knowledges" and recognizes that "all inquiry is both political and moral." Their edited collection shares many of the desires and objectives laid out by Fals-Borda in his groundbreaking work on PAR, but it also makes a concerted effort to account for the recent decolonial turn within scholarship. Although noble, their efforts to produce a "merger of indigenous and critical methodologies" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008, 2) are not beyond reproach. Ahenakew (2016: 324), for instance, argues that the recent decolonization fad within scholarship runs the risk of "grafting Indigenous knowledges into non-Indigenous ways of knowing." While attempts at epistemological and methodological hybridity may yield novel and valuable insights, they could also have the unintended consequence of "further contribut[ing] to the elimination of Indigenous peoples as *distinct* Indigenous peoples both in their relationship with the state, in their relation to the land, and in terms of the perceived worth of their knowledge" (Ahenakew 2016: 324, emphasis added). Thinking about this caveat in relation to PAR approaches and the study of political participation, a partnership of mutual exchange should take seriously the varied meanings of political participation *as defined by* those who are participating, and should also produce novel and critical insights that advance our understanding of the complex worlds we inhabit. Partnership in the context of researching political participation is not about compromise. Instead, it is about a mutual appreciation of what counts as political, what can be called research, and what constitutes knowledge.

Conclusion

Participatory action research is an approach to the advancement of knowledge that values collaboration and emphasizes the active involvement by ordinary people in effecting social change. Applied to the study of political participation, PAR recognizes the importance of micro-political acts that occur in the realm of everyday life. It rejects the positivist research tradition that sets up an unequal relationship in which "expert" researchers use their skills and formal education as a mining permit to extract data from "ordinary" subjects. Instead, PAR seeks to cultivate a subject–subject relationship in the research context, where all participants teach and learn simultaneously. To do this effectively, PAR practitioners use a range of narrative and visual techniques that can overcome language and cultural barriers, which are sometimes a feature of the research context. Storytelling, theatre, art, photo-elicitation, and oral histories are some of the more common methods through which research participants express their political subjectivities and give meaning to their political participation.

PAR is not without its drawbacks, and scholars have identified instances in which marginalized communities have been further exploited in the name of participation. To avoid the pitfalls associated with PAR, it is important for the research agenda to be driven by the community that is seeking change. In other words, social transformation—the desire, the vision, and the means through which to achieve it—must be led by the community. Although it is widely recognized that PAR emerged in the 1970s, its central ethos—a collaborative style of producing knowledge that occurs in successive cycles of planning, acting, reflecting, and engagement—is not a product of the twentieth century. Reflexive and mutual learning has been part of the daily lives of Indigenous communities and other marginalized groups long before this style of research acquired formal recognition as, "participatory action research." Partly in response to failed attempts at PAR, we have witnessed calls to decolonize the university, academic disciplines and knowledge more generally. These struggles have encouraged researchers to take Indigenous methodologies more seriously. While not a panacea for epistemic justice, such approaches recognize the importance of the self-determination of subjugated peoples for creating and participating in a more just world and are, thus, worthy of further consideration and critical application in the study of political participation.

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CHAPTER 21

BRIDGING QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES IN THE STUDY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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Much research that is conducted in the field of political participation is done within a particular perspective that is often guided by the values and preferences of the researcher and how they feel the political world should best be investigated (Henn, Weinstein, and Foard 2009). Typically, this will involve privileging either a positivist–quantitative or interpretivist–qualitative style of research. We have encountered some of these theoretical perspectives and methods of inquiry in earlier chapters contained within this collection. However, increasingly researchers are eschewing such standpoint approaches in favor of more flexible approaches that are driven by the notion that the research process should be shaped by the research questions examined and by what is viable given the context of the research (Bryman 2016). Adopting such a pragmatist perspective may result in the need to combine different approaches and methods—including both quantitative and qualitative—in a single study. Conducting research in this way may bring particular advantages for the study of political participation. In particular, using mixed methods may offer different dimensions of a phenomenon which might otherwise have remained hidden, or enhance the quality of the research by bolstering validity and reliability of the results, or help to overcome any bias that may follow from reliance on a single method (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Drawing upon a variety of examples of using different methods and data sources to study youth and political participation (including our own research experiences), we argue that it is possible to bridge the so-called quantitative–qualitative divide, and to generate high-quality research in doing so.

Philosophical Assumptions

Usually, the different philosophical approaches in Social Sciences[1] are contrasted on three bases: ontological (related to the existence of a real objective world), epistemological (related to the possibility of knowing this world and the forms this knowledge would take), and methodological (referring to the technical instruments that are used in order to acquire that knowledge) (Corbetta 2003: 12–13). Because these are the bases upon which a research study is built, there are several reasons for wanting to have a clear and transparent knowledge of the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin research because they will help comprehend the methodological choices and the methods adopted. Therefore, there is a need to understand the interrelationship of the key components of research (ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods) to avoid confusion when discussing theoretical approaches to social phenomena. It is also important to be able to recognize others' positions as researchers—and to defend our own (Grix 2019).

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[1] The term "social sciences" encompasses a broad range of connected disciplines including—but not limited to—psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, and political science. Research within the

The specific way in which ontologies and epistemologies influence the structure and process of social research is explained by the area of study known as the philosophy of science. Ontology has been defined as the science or theory of "being" and asks questions of how our world is built, questions such as, "is there a 'real' world 'out there' that is independent of our knowledge of it?" (Marsh and Stoker 2002:18). This notion of reality can range from a world that is real and independent from our knowledge (realism), to the idea that there is no real world, implying that this world is socially constructed, dependent on time or culture (constructionism) (Creswell 2013; Sarantakos 2013). These are the two dominant ontologies, realism (or essentialism or foundationalism) and constructionism (or anti-foundationalism or relativism) (Marsh and Stoker 2002). For realists, the answers to questions are objective, and "out there" and waiting to be "measured," just like the answers to questions about the nature of electrons (Sider 2009: 409). In contrast, and for constructionists, answers to questions are subjective to each individual, and concepts like electrons were arbitrarily created by us humans. For example, a realist or foundationalist ontological position might consider that young women and young men have fundamental differences that are features of their very existence, which persist over time and are common across cultures that lead them to vote or not. On the other hand, a constructionist or anti-foundationalist ontological position would understand the differences between men and women (which would lead them to vote or not) as socially constructed. As such, they are not essential differences but are particular to a different time and culture.

Epistemology is how we know things, a branch of philosophy that addresses the question of the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge (Klein 2005), especially in regard to its methods, validation, and the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality, whatever it is understood to be (Blaikie 2009). Focused on the knowledge-gathering process, epistemology is also concerned with developing new models or theories that are better than existing models and theories. When reflecting on theories, and concepts in general, we have to reflect on the assumptions on which they are based and where they originate from in the first place. Two contrasting epistemological positions are those contained within the research paradigms:[2] "positivism" (usually associated with quantitative research strategies)

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social sciences involves the disciplined and systematic study of society and its institutions, and of how and why people behave as they do—both as individuals and in groups within society (Halloran 2010).

[2] The definition of paradigm used is taken from Kuhn (1970), who defined paradigms in terms of, "what members of a scientific community share, and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them" (p. 176). For example, Henn, Weinstein, and Wring (2002) were among the first of many, whose studies marked a turning point in academic research on young people's political engagement. Prior to the late 1990s, the

and "interpretivism" (often associated with qualitative research strategies) (Howe 1992). Broadly speaking, the former is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond. For example, a positivist epistemological position might be that youth propensity to vote or not is due to individual differences and personality traits that can be assessed by a psychometric personality test (for example, see Ackermann 2016; Gerber, Huber, Raso, and Ha 2009; Hennessy, Delli Carpini, Blank, Winneg, and Jamieson 2015). Positivism also recognizes that our knowledge of the world is limited to what can be observed (Halperin and Heath 2017), and the aim is to produce generalizable causal statements about the relationship between social phenomena. Additionally, a considerable number of studies in the field of youth political participation are positivist in nature (Marsh, O'Toole, and Jones 2007), where the authors make a priori assumptions about the knowledge of young people's understandings of politics, rather than seeking to discover how young people themselves view, experience, and "live" politics. Interpretivism, on the other hand, can be understood as an epistemological position that is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action—and that this may involve different methods of data collection (Bryman 2016). An example of a study that takes an interpretivist epistemological position is Sloam's (2018) article on #Votebecause, where the author uses a qualitative approach to explore the motivations for youth political participation and seeks to understand the processes by which young people become politically active (Sloam 2018). Consequently, choosing one of these epistemological positions will lead to the deployment of a different methodology according to the position taken.

METHODOLOGICAL MOVEMENTS: QUANTITATIVE, QUALITATIVE AND MIXED METHODS

When considering the relationship that both ontology and epistemology have with methodology, ontologies inform methodologies as to the nature of reality, or better as to "what" social research is supposed to study. For instance, reflecting on the examples considered in the previous section concerning the different ontological positions, if we consider a realist or foundationalist position—such as assuming that young males and females have different levels of voting turnout simply because they are male or female—a researcher may choose to use a quantitative methodology. In other words, we could use a questionnaire where we would ask the gender of the respondent along with voting behavior questions, and explore the statistical relations between these different variables. If a constructionist or anti-foundationalist position is taken, for example assuming that the differences that exist

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common paradigm for youth and politics research was based on notions of apathy or alienation (e.g., Dean 1960). Henn and colleagues challenged this, concluding that young people were not disengaged from politics, but they were instead a "generation apart —politically engaged but with different political priorities missed by many academic studies (Henn, Weinstein, and Wring, 2002).

between young men and young women are socially constructed, we may opt to use a qualitative methodological approach to explore their reasons for voting or not. Epistemologies inform methodologies about the nature of knowledge, or about what counts as "data" and where knowledge is to be sought. In the previous example (that young people's vote is determined by individual differences and personality characteristics), a positivist epistemological position would therefore likely suggest the need for a quantitative methodological approach. A post-positivist position, on the other hand, like the case of Sloam's study (2018), suggests the choice for a qualitative approach. Methodologies prepare "packages" of appropriate research designs, to be deployed by researchers, instructing them as to where to focus their research activity, and how to recognize and extract knowledge (Sarantakos 2013).

Furthermore, different methodological approaches would call for different research designs. A quantitative methodological approach would suggest the need for a cross-sectional or for a longitudinal study, for example a questionnaire exploring young people's political participation (generally using a representative sample) where data could be collected in a specific moment in time or across a longer period of time. A qualitative study would more likely adopt a case study research design, for example a group of five semi-structured or unstructured interviews exploring in some depth young people's sense of political efficacy. The findings from such a study could not be extrapolated to a wider population, and therefore would not be considered to be representative of the views of young people across a given population.

The debate around the application of quantitative or qualitative methodologies has evolved from discussions concerning the incompatibility of the techniques and procedures through to debating the irreconcilability of the epistemological assumptions of quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Howe 1992). The quantitative research methodology is strongly associated with the positivist research paradigm, and usually uses the scientific approach to study social phenomena. This type of research emphasizes numerical data gathering and analyzing this data using statistical methods; it has an objectivist view on social reality and it measures the (relationships between) variables for the purposes of testing hypotheses or theories that are linked to general causal explanations (Bryman 2016; Creswell 2013; Sarantakos 2013). This approach has been used across a great number of studies in the field of politics (for example, Caprara et al. 2009; Eckstein et al. 2012; Henn and Oldfield 2016; Pontes, Henn, and Griffiths 2018; Vecchione and Caprara 2009). A particularly interesting example is Reichert's (2016) study on how internal political efficacy translates political knowledge into political participation. The author used mediated multiple regression analyses to explore this issue, and the results indicated that political knowledge translated into internal political efficacy; thus, it affects political participation of various kinds indirectly. Furthermore, the author also revealed that internal political efficacy and intentions to participate politically yielded simultaneous direct effects only on conventional political participation. Sequentially mediated effects appear for voting and conventional political participation, with political knowledge being mediated by internal political efficacy and subsequently also by behavioral intentions (Reichert 2016). This type of analysis would be more difficult to acquire using qualitative methods, as it was predicated on a research design using a representative sample, the testing of hypotheses, with results presented on the various causal relationships between the different variables in the study.

Additionally, quantitative methods are deductive in nature, where the researcher starts from a theory to hypotheses to data, to ultimately add to or to contradict the theory (Creswell and Clark 2017). Henn and colleagues suggest that this approach (deduction) is often referred to as using the hypothetic–deductive method associated with a "theory-then-research" strategy (Henn et al. 2009: 52). Using this approach, theories are consulted and these then guide the formulation of specific research questions. Those research questions are constructed in the form of hypotheses, which are then tested with empirical data. Additionally, if the data then demonstrate that the theory has any gaps, then it needs to be revised, and data have to be inspected in different ways to improve the theory (Henn et al. 2009). A useful example of this can be found in a study conducted by Henn and colleagues (2017), where the authors assessed the veracity of Inglehart's (1977) postmaterialist thesis[3] by examining recent patterns of youth political participation. This research was conducted in order to contribute to the debate around whether a postmaterialist generational shift in political participation preferences had actually occurred in recent years. Based on their findings, the authors concluded that Inglehart's postmaterialist thesis is still relevant in helping to understand the patterns of youth political participation, even under existing economic austerity conditions (Henn, Oldfield, and Hart 2017). The data collection techniques commonly deployed in quantitative research are mostly surveys, experimental studies, and quasi-experimental research.

Qualitative methods, on the other hand, are mainly used for naturalistic studies. They attempt to interpret different phenomena based on the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Similarly, qualitative research has also been defined as "how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (Merriam 2009: 13). Thus, qualitative researchers have engaged themselves directly in society to observe people in their social interactions. Qualitative research encompasses several features—it is attached to the interpretative school of thought, it has a subjective view of social reality, it is flexible, and it uses an inductive approach. Induction, contrary to deduction, moves from a set of observations to a theory, and it allows a theory to be constructed from emerging patterns in the research data. As suggested by Henn and colleagues, it is associated with an analytic–inductive method, reflecting a "research-then-theory" research strategy (Henn et al. 2009: 53). In other words, it is deployed when researchers are not attempting to test how useful a particular theory is, but instead are seeking to understand a particular phenomenon, and through this, trying to build up an explanation of it (Marsh and Stoker 2002).

These two methodologies—quantitative and qualitative—use quite distinct research techniques and modes of operation (Sarantakos 2013) that have associated merits and limitations. Quantitative research usually employs highly structured techniques of data collection that allow quantification, hypotheses, measurement, and operationalization, as well as the use of statistical methods of data analysis. On the other hand, qualitative researchers use less structured techniques of data collection and analysis, because their emphasis is on discovery, exploration, and acquiring social meaning, rather than on hypothesis testing. Although quantitative research is often considered more reliable, due to statistical methods, than qualitative research, it does not always shed light on the full complexity of what is being investigated (Bryman 2016). For example, O'Toole (2003) conducted a study on young people's conceptions of the "political" where she explored how young people themselves define politics. The author used a qualitative methodology instead of a quantitative methodology in order to allow respondents to report in their own terms and to permit a deep description of how participants conceive the political (O'Toole 2003). Although it is claimed that qualitative research can provide rich and in-depth details about the topic of research, it is not always generalizable due to small sample sizes and the subjective nature of research.

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[3] In his influential book *The Silent Revolution* (1977), Ronald Inglehart anticipated some of the patterns of contemporary political participation which constituted the basis for his postmaterialist thesis where he considered the centrality of economic forces in shaping citizens' values and behaviors.

In addition to these two methodological traditions (qualitative and quantitative), a third methodological movement has emerged as a methodological choice for academics across a variety of discipline areas (Cameron 2011; Creswell 2013). Commonly known as mixed methods research, it encompasses a research design with its own philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry (Creswell and Clark 2017) and suggests an integration of quantitative and qualitative data within the same investigation. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach used alone (Creswell and Clark 2017; Tashakkori and Teddlie 2010). For example, in a study that investigates what encourages young people to participate in everyday political talk, or impedes them, Ekström (2016) used mixed methods (including diaries, individual interviews, group interviews, and a survey) in order to gain a comprehensive view on the participants' everyday activities and their experiences, as well as how they reflect and talk about politics with their peers (Ekström 2016). The philosophical reasoning frequently adopted when using this style of mixed methods research approach is "pragmatism" (Cameron 2011), which is outlined later in this chapter.

Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods for the Study of Political Participation

According to some authors, there are inherent advantages that need to be acknowledged when using either qualitative or quantitative research methods (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, and Namey 2005; Winters and Carvalho 2014). For example, in qualitative-based political research studies like O'Toole's (2003), participants' own words can be captured, with the methods used to focus on issues that are of salience to themselves, rather than being driven by the researcher's own agenda. Furthermore, such participant-centered qualitative studies permit clarification to be sought on matters that emerge as particularly valuable, and for such issues to be explored in significant depth. A qualitative approach, would allow researchers to access an understanding of young people's perceptions of what politics is and how they engage and participate in politics (Marsh, O'Toole, and Jones 2007). An additional benefit that flows from qualitative research studies is that they allow for non-verbal behaviors to be noted and recorded; for instance, this can be very important for the purposes of capturing signals from otherwise "silent" participants in focus groups who may not be willing to challenge the opinions expressed by vocal others with which they disagree (Kyroglou and Henn 2020). Finally, the qualitative approach requires little specialist equipment, with the process drawing on existing skills of conversation and communication (McNabb 2015; Merriam 2009).

Nonetheless, qualitative-based studies are not without their limitations. For instance, Pontes and colleagues (Pontes, Henn, and Griffiths 2018) consider in some depth a qualitative study using focus groups, that had as its objective to understand how young people defined political engagement and which behaviors they associated with such political engagement. Given the exploratory nature of the study, the number of individuals in each focus group and the total number of focus groups conducted were relatively few, although the scale of the study was considered appropriate for such a qualitative investigation (Mack et al. 2005). Nonetheless, the authors acknowledge that a greater number of focus groups would likely have yielded greater depth and diversity to the study—although without the benefit of incentives, it proved difficult to recruit young people to participate in the focus groups. Pontes, Henn, and Griffiths (2018) also note that given the participants were self-selecting, an element of bias may have been introduced in the way that participants answered the questions (Babbie 2014)—although as Henn, Weinstein, and Foard (2009) contend, this is a challenge for quantitative and qualitative studies alike.

Quantitative research presents with two key advantages (among others). The first of these is that such research can reliably determine whether one concept or theory is better than alternatives via empirical hypothesis testing. Secondly and related to this, the results generated can be projectable to the wider population under specific sampling circumstances (Bryman 2016). However, there are nonetheless potential disadvantages that follow with quantitative-based research, the primary of which are that the variables are only investigated if they are known prior to the beginning of the survey, and therefore have been taken into account in the questionnaire (Barker et al. 2002).

The Mixed Methods Approach

Increasingly, researchers are inclined to consider designing studies that use both qualitative and quantitative approaches in combination, taking as their stating point that using mixed methods is appropriate where the nature of the research questions and the research context itself demand such a pragmatic position (Henn, Weinstein, and Foard 2009). Although pragmatism is the most frequently adopted philosophical foundation in mixed methods research, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) reconstructed what is now becoming a well-known inventory of different stances about different philosophical foundations of mixed methods. In this section we focus on only two of the most commonly known positions—the incompatibility thesis and the compatibility thesis. The first stance holds that paradigms are different (the "*incompatibility thesis*") and cannot be mixed; thus, mixed methods research is an untenable proposition. This is due to the fundamental differences in the paradigms underlying those distinctions (positivism for quantitative research and constructivism for qualitative research); thus, the incompatibility thesis is associated with the idea of an inevitable link between paradigms and research methods. It therefore follows from this that if the underlying premises of different paradigms conflict with one another, the methods associated with those paradigms cannot be combined.

On a philosophical level, mixed methodologists countered the incompatibility thesis by positing a different paradigm: pragmatism. The main principle of pragmatism as a research paradigm is that quantitative and qualitative methods may be potentially well-matched in certain research studies depending on the research questions (hence the "*compatibility thesis*"). Consequently, pragmatism rejects the premises presented by the incompatibility thesis. For instance, Howe described the compatibility thesis as supporting the view, beginning to dominate practice, that combining quantitative and qualitative methods is epistemologically coherent (1988: 10). A pragmatic approach would encourage researchers to consider taking the position that what matters is to understand a certain behavior despite methodologies and procedures. Furthermore, pragmatism does not reject the relevance of concepts of the philosophy of knowledge, but it does reject that which is regarded in other paradigms as the privileging of ontology over epistemology and epistemology over method. Morgan (2007) advocates a pragmatic approach that centers on methodology and its connection with epistemology and methods, with equal attention being devoted to each connection, with a greater focus on the research questions being posed in the research. For example, in their study of young people's understandings of political engagement, Pontes, Henn, and Griffiths (2018) note that by adopting a pragmatist position, they were in essence assuming that from an epistemological perspective, the research would at some stage take an objective approach by purposely avoiding interaction with participants (the quantitative element of the study). However, during the qualitative phase of the study, they determined that it would be necessary to take a more subjective approach by interacting with research participants to construct realities.

These different positions suggest a lively and unresolved conversation about paradigms in the mixed methods field. This is manifest in terms of differences of opinions and a continuation of the paradigm debate (e.g., Greene, Caracelli, and Graham 1989) that is based on the conflict between the competing scientific worldviews of positivism and constructivism on philosophical and methodological issues (Howe 1988; Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998).

The pragmatist paradigm is more concerned with research questions than with a worldview or the method that is supposed to underline the research. The starting position for political scientists working within this paradigm is that as most research seeks solutions to real-world problems, it is important to choose methods that help to accurately achieve that ambition (Howe 1992). The pragmatic paradigm has what Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) and Creswell and colleagues (2003) see as a permission to study areas that are of interest, embracing methods that are appropriate. For instance, Pontes, Henn, and Griffiths (2018) adopted the pragmatist paradigm because it allowed for exploration of an in-depth understanding of the concept of political engagement as defined and perceived by young people themselves. This approach allowed the researchers to develop a quantitative instrument based on young people's definitions of political engagement, which allowed for greater accuracy in assessing youth's engagement with politics. They note how such a position embraced at the same time the strong belief that youth political engagement can be studied scientifically, and therefore statistically. This rationale justified the implementation of a mixed methods approach including both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Purposes for Conducting Mixed Methods Research

Greene et al. (1989) propose that there are five major purposes for conducting mixed methods research—*triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation,* and *expansion*. The first of these, *triangulation* involves seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods, whether they are quantitative or qualitative. For instance, Busse, Hashem-Wangler, and Tholen (2015) used triangulation of original empirical survey data and interview data along with complementary secondary data from another project that had been previously carried out. Using this procedure for their study of youth and politics in Germany, their purpose was to ensure as far as possible that they would obtain the same results through the different methods of data collection used.

In contrast, *complementarity* seeks the elaboration, enhancement, illustration, and clarification of the results from one method as set against the results from a different method. In other words, qualitative and quantitative methods are used to measure the overlapping but also different facets of a phenomenon, yielding an enriched, embellished understanding of that phenomenon. This differs from triangulation because the logic of convergence requires that different methods be deployed in the same study to assess the same conceptual phenomenon. For example, the idea of triangulation implies that the results of an investigation employing a method associated with one research strategy (a quantitative approach, for example) are cross-checked against the results using a method associated with the other research strategy (a qualitative approach, for example). Complementarity, on the other hand, indicates that a more complete answer to a research question or set of research questions can be achieved by including both quantitative and qualitative methods. It implies that any potential gaps left by one method can be filled by another (Bryman 2016). The complementarity intent can be illustrated by the use of a qualitative interview to understand young people's views on what they understand political self-efficacy to be and how someone would be recognized as self-efficacious in politics, combined with a quantitative questionnaire to collect data on young people's levels of political self-efficacy.

By *development*, Greene and colleagues (1989) refer to the use of results from one method in order to help develop or inform an alternative method, where that development is broadly constructed to include sampling and implementation, as well as measurement decisions. The main purpose is to increase the validity of constructs and inquiry results by taking advantage of inherent method strengths—it involves the sequential use of qualitative and quantitative methods, where the first method is used to help inform the development of the second. This was the approach chosen in research reported by Pontes, Henn, and Griffiths (2018), where focus groups were primarily conducted in order to explore young people's understandings of political engagement, followed by a questionnaire survey to validate a scale to assess youth political engagement.

The purpose of *initiation* when using mixed methods is related to discovering paradoxes and contradictions that lead to the reframing of a research question. The rationale behind initiation is to increase the breadth and depth of inquiry results and interpretations by analyzing them from the different perspectives of different methods and paradigms. In a complex study, for example, or even across different studies, the consistencies and potential discrepancies in a qualitative phase of a research project are compared with quantitative findings to intentionally analyze for fresh insights invoked by means of contradiction and paradox. In other words, initiation is the further exploration of unexpected outcomes in a research project (unexpected outcomes are usually not seen, and therefore cannot be included in advance of the design of the study). For instance, initiation refers to the process where different methods are used to investigate different aspects or dimensions of the same phenomenon; however, in contrast to complementarity, the intention is divergence in order to generate new understandings. Bryman has confirmed that initiation (or "unexpected results") is not often used in mixed methods studies (2016: 642). However, Henn et al. (1997) offer an example of initiation in practice in the field of political participation with their study of grassroots Labour party members that was conducted shortly after Tony Blair was elected to the leadership of the party in 1994. Results from an initial quantitative survey indicated an overwhelmingly positive reaction to Blair's leadership and to the "New Labour" project, with 88 percent claiming that he was a potential election winner and 76 percent that he was a strong leader. However, follow-on focus groups also revealed a degree of hesitancy and skepticism of Blair and his modernization plans for the party; this was typified by a widely shared view expressed that, "I don't necessarily agree with everything Tony Blair says or does, but if it means defeating the Tories, then I'm all for it" (Henn et al. 1997: 506).

Finally, by the purpose of *expansion,* Greene et al. (1989) suggested that the researcher's aim is to extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components. For example, Redmond and colleagues (2008) conducted a longitudinal mixed methods study on the attitudes, perceptions, and concerns of student social workers where the main purpose was to understand participants' future plans as they progress through a two-year professional training program (Redmond, Guerin, and Devitt 2008). A mixed method study that adopts an expansion intent usually aims for scope and breadth by including multiple components. It is commonly used in evaluation contexts (for example, see Greene et al. 1989; Odendaal, Atkins, and Lewin 2016), where the researcher would use qualitative methods to assess program processes and use quantitative methods to assess program outcomes.

Types of Mixed Methods

There exists a vast array of different perspectives and designs in mixed methods research (Creswell and Clark 2017). According to Creswell (2013). the three main strategies of inquiry for mixed methods research include *concurrent mixed methods*, *transformative mixed methods*, and *sequential mixed methods* (p. 18).

Concurrent mixed methods procedures are those in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, an investigator collects both forms of data at the same time during the study and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results. In such cases, the quantitative and qualitative data are assigned equal weight. For example, Schrum, Skeele, and Grant (2002–2003) utilized a case study approach to evaluate the integration of technology in a college curriculum during a two-year period from the perspectives of faculty, students, administrators, and technology project directors. In the quantitative component, 13 faculty as well as students, 183 in Year 1 and 135 in Year 2, completed a pre-questionnaire and a post-questionnaire designed to assess their technology skills. In the qualitative component, faculty members, technology project directors, and university administrators participated in focus groups to discuss ways to improve the technology project. The quantitative and qualitative studies were subsequently analyzed at the same time (Schrum, Skeele, and Grant 2002).

Transformative mixed methods procedures can be contrasted with concurrent mixed methods in that they involve the researcher using a theoretical lens as an overarching perspective within a design that contains both quantitative and qualitative data. This lens profiles a framework for topics of interest, methods for collecting data, and outcomes or changes anticipated by the study (Creswell 2013). This type of mixed method is chosen especially when the research is focused on the tensions that arise when unequal power relationships permeate a research context that addresses intransigent social problems (Leavy 2017). For example, the question of power arises in terms of privileges associated with economic status, religious beliefs, immigrant status, race/ethnicity, tribal identity, gender, disability, and status as an Indigenous person or as a colonizer. This transformative mixed methods approach, also focuses on the strengths that reside in communities that experience discrimination and oppression on the basis of their cultural values and experiences (Mertens 2010). Hodgkin's (2008) study provides an example of a transformative feminist mixed methods study of the differences between men and women in terms of their social capital. She began with a quantitative survey of a large representative sample of men and women to investigate their social, community, and civic participation. She followed this with a qualitative data-collection stage in which she conducted in-depth interviews with women about their processes of interacting with social, community, and civic settings and how they felt about their activities and their lives. Through such an approach, she was able to broaden understandings of differences between men and women beyond purely economic differences and to include social capital (Hodgkin 2008).

Finally, *sequential mixed methods* procedures are those in which the researcher seeks to elaborate on, or expand beyond, the findings of one method with another. For instance, this may involve a phased research approach that begins with a qualitative method for exploratory purposes before proceeding to a quantitative method involving a large sample so that the researcher can generalize results to a particular population. The *Youth Civic and Character Measures Toolkit* (Syvertsen, Wray-Lake, and Metzger 2015) offers a useful example. Here, the authors' main goal was to develop and test a set of measures to assess civic engagement as well as character strength measures that were appropriate for youth in middle childhood and adolescence. Syvertsen and colleagues adopted a sequential mixed methods approach whereby qualitative interviews were initially conducted in order to assess young people's understandings of different civic-related character strengths as well as the perceived links between these character strengths and different forms of civic engagement (including voting, volunteering, or environmental activities). Young people's narratives were used to inform the development of survey items on different civic engagement related scales (Syvertsen, Wray-Lake, and Metzger 2015).

Alternatively, a study may begin with a quantitative method in which theories or concepts are tested, which is then followed by a qualitative method involving detailed exploration with a few cases or individuals (Creswell 2013: 18–19). A study conducted by Li and colleagues

(2015) offers a useful example as illustration for such an approach. Here, the authors' primary objective was to examine the technology usage of digital generation student teachers and the impact of possible internal and external barriers on their use of technology. They employed a sequential mixed methods research design which included an initial quantitative survey and then follow-up qualitative interviews. The qualitative results helped the authors explain the initial survey results and then to build improved understandings of the significant and nonsignificant quantitative findings (Li, Worch, Zhou, and Aguiton 2015).

It is also important to note that there may be different sequences used in mixed methods designs (in terms of the order the methods take in time), as well as the relative importance of each method. Morgan (1998) has suggested four possible mixed methods designs according to methods' sequencing and priority, including (i) qualitative followed by *quantitative;*[4] (ii) quantitative followed by *qualitative*; (iii) *quantitative* followed by qualitative; and (iv) *qualitative* followed by quantitative.

Using a sequential mixed methods approach, the findings from one type of study can be checked against the findings from a different study. For example, the results of a qualitative study might be checked against an earlier quantitative study, with the aim to generally clarify and enhance the validity of findings (Bryman 2016). For example, a study might involve an initial quantitative phase that included the development and validation of a scale to assess young people's views on a particular topic (such as their thoughts on the merits of different tactics used by environmental activists), followed by interviews to explore some of the earlier quantitative results in more depth. Alternatively, qualitative research might be conducted at the outset, in order to provide background information on context and participants, or to act as a source of hypotheses, or to aid scale construction.

Conclusion

The study of political participation is complex, and easily mis-specified through research. If the field is not carefully theorized, or if due regard with respect to the research design and selection of methods is not given sufficient consideration in advance, then conclusions that follow from such studies may offer little in terms of clarity of understanding. A mixed methods approach has several important advantages for the study of political participation. For example, it allows researchers to answer complex research questions that would not be possible to achieve with quantitative or qualitative research in isolation. Additionally, mixed methods research may provide more valid inferences (if the results from the qualitative and quantitative methods converge), or lead to extra reflection and hypothesis revision (if qualitative and quantitative results are divergent or contradictory). In this chapter, we have argued that to privilege certain research standpoints, perspectives, and methods—whether quantitative or qualitative—over the realities and requirements of the field of study may be counter-productive. Instead, we have considered the idea that the quality of research and the contribution to knowledge that is intended to flow from that, will each be enhanced where that research is shaped by pragmatic decisions about the nature of the research questions and of the field itself. Where such reflections lead to the adoption of mixed methods studies that bridge the so-called quantitative–qualitative divide in the pursuit of the highest quality research, then this is to be welcomed.

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[4] The methods in italic denote the primary method in that sequence.

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PART IV

MODES OF PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER 22

LINKING ELECTORAL AND PARTISAN PARTICIPATION

MARK N. FRANKLIN

ONE reason people vote[1] at an election is to support a preferred party in its quest to influence the course of public affairs.[2] As long ago pointed out by Downs (1957), eligible voters' willingness to vote (paying the "costs" of voting, in Downs's terminology) depends on the extent to which they prefer one candidate over another. If they have no strong preference between parties competing for their votes then they might as well save themselves the trouble (1957: 39).

This insight seems to provide grounds for supposing that voter turnout might be linked to the extent of partisanship and, indeed, past research has found a strong connection between declining partisanship and declining turnout, at least in Britain. Heath (2007) even suggested (building on the work of Plutzer 2002) that previously high partisanship might have played a role in maintaining the long-term stability of high voter turnout,. The temptation is to go further and think that the acquisition of partisanship might come hand-in-hand with the acquisition of a "habit of voting" that apparently results from repeated acts of voting (for a survey of relevant literature see Dinas 2018). But I also follow Plutzer (2002) in arguing that partisanship plays a more fundamental role in maintaining long-term turnout stability, locking down behavioral differences at the individual level of analysis that have other sources. In this chapter I suggest a causal path by which this stabilization can occur, using survey data from 14 countries over periods of 20–50 years.

I base my approach on party-level findings that show how parties try (by modifying their policies) to re-attach voters disenchanted by previous policy failures (Franklin and Lutz 2020). These policy-related developments give rise to an equilibrium rate of party support that, over time, is repeatedly disturbed only to then be reinstated. I suggest that a second but closely connected dynamic process should have similar consequences for turnout as newly competitive elections restore voter support for parties whose inattention to voter preferences had previously cost them votes. In other words, the cycle of loss and restoration of party support should be mirrored by a cycle of more or less competitive elections where more competitive elections restore turnout rates that had fallen at previous, less competitive, elections (cf. Franklin 2004; Pacheco 2008; Evans Ensley and Carmines 2014). I then explore the individual-level and election-level concomitants of this suggested party-level mechanism. I show how findings at each level serve to explain otherwise anomalous observations at other levels of analysis.

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[1] An online appendix to this chapter can be found at https://digitalrepository.trincol.edu/facpub/314 (permanent URL).

[2] André Blais would rate this reason as secondary, effective only when civic duty is lacking (Galais and Blais 2016). But it is noteworthy that non-voters do not explain their failures to vote as due to lack of civic duty. Even when structural equation modeling shows apparently clear evidence of duty's primacy (ibid.), the implicit effect on non-voting is essentially an effect on missing data. Models using the duty variable are all of them mis-specified on this account.

In this chapter I study the interplay of these multi-level processes by combining survey with aggregate data and investigating the extent to which proper model specification requires data at all levels simultaneously.

HABITUAL VOTING AND THE DYNAMICS OF TURNOUT VARIATIONS

I start with the insight expressed in a foundational study of voting behavior (Campbell et al. 1960) that people are far more likely to vote who care about an election's outcome. But those authors point out (1960: 496) that most of the reasons that would make people care about the outcome are not related to turnout. They found just one individual-level phenomenon reliably associated with turnout: partisanship. Respondents who more closely identified with a political party were more likely to vote. Campbell and his co-authors saw this identification with party as being closely associated with age (1960: 497). Twelve years later Verba and Nie (1972) revisited the topic and labeled the phenomenon of rising turnout with increasing age a "start-up" phenomenon. This was mirrored by a "slow-down" phenomenon (also noted by Campbell and his co-authors) among older voters. Verba and Nie gave close attention to these phenomena but did not manage to fully explain the startup phenomenon. Another 30 years were to pass before, addressing this theoretical gap, Plutzer (2002) demonstrated persuasively that young adults experience a "transitional" period that leads them to either acquire a "habit of voting" or, alternatively, a "habit of non-voting." This finding was repeatedly confirmed over ensuing years in a series of experimental and quasi-experimental studies, the first one published only a year after Plutzer's seminal article (Gerber, Green, and Schachar 2003). For a survey see Dinas (2018).

It is tempting to suppose that this literature regarding habit-formation provides the link between partisanship and turnout, both resulting from habitual behavior. The temptation is strengthened when we notice that the correlation between turnout and partisanship is even stronger than the correlation between turnout and age (r = 0.83 for partisanship and turnout across the countries I focus on in this chapter, as compared to r = 0.68 for age and turnout).[3]

But fastening on evolving partisanship as a source of evolving turnout would ignore the careful work of Eric Plutzer (referenced earlier) who saw differences between rates of partisanship for different groups of people as consequences of the transition to habitual voting rather than its cause. Plutzer's insistence on partisanship as a stable trait instead focuses us on that variable's role in explaining the slow-moving evolution of election-level voter turnout, the topic to which we now turn.

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[3] These correlations are for voting and partisanship aggregated to the level of age in years, I truncate the age scale at age 70 so as to focus on the age range characterized by rising turnout.

Past research (Franklin 2004; Johnson et al. 2007; Vowles et al. 2017) has seen voter turnout as an archetypical example of a quantity that is in dynamic equilibrium. For any given country at any given time, turnout sits at a rate set by a balance of forces. Most of those forces are slow to change and are largely captured by the rate of turnout at the previous election ("turnout $_{t-1}$" in statistical parlance). One can think of these forces as manifesting the power of inertia in human affairs, serving to hold back turnout change.

Nevertheless, things do change. An influence on aggregate-level turnout, stable for decades, can alter as a result of legislation or other factors. More importantly, some forces are by their nature quite ephemeral. The marginality of the election (which can motivate people to vote in a tight race who might not have voted had the outcome been a foregone conclusion) is a quintessential short-term force. Another is the electoral clarity bestowed by a party that receives close to 50 percent of the votes (such parties, if large enough, can govern alone and, if not quite large enough to govern alone, will dominate any coalition of which they form part, simplifying the decision-process for voters—see Russo et al. 2020). Long-term forces, by contrast, are more closely associated with the political system than with party politics. Often, such forces are institutional or quasi-institutional in nature: rules such as the voting age or whether voting is compulsory.

A short-term force that has received little attention in turnout studies plays a central role in this chapter: voter-party policy congruence (the proximity of voters to parties, here operationalized in left–right terms).

A Unified View of Party Choice, Partisanship, and Turnout

In the chapter I co-authored with Georg Lutz on partisanship in the process of party choice (Franklin and Lutz 2020) we employed error correction models to investigate the way in which variations in policy congruence between voters and parties govern fluctuations in party support around a central tendency established by partisanship, consistent with classic theorizing (Campbell et al. 1960). In this section, I revisit and build on those findings to theorize a connection between party choice and turnout such that voter–party policy congruence contributes towards the maintenance of an equilibrium rate, not just for party choice but for turnout as well.

The balance of forces that maintains an equilibrium rate of party choice involves a feedback loop that "corrects" the positions taken by political parties when those positions drift away from supporter preferences. These forces are illustrated in the flowchart shown in Figure 22.1.

The story shown there starts with a successful party feeling free to drift away from supporter preferences (arrow 1), often due to party activists' desires to "purify" the party's message, resulting in declining congruence between party policies and supporter preferences.

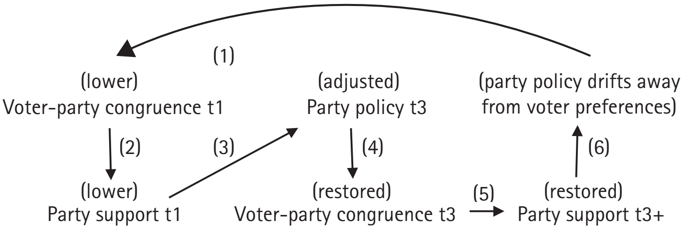

FIGURE 22.1 Schema for a feedback loop "correcting" voter–party congruence

In response, voters reduce the support they give to the party at that election (arrow 2). All of this happens during the run-up to an election whose outcome becomes known at the point in time labeled t1 in the schema. Party leaders use this signal to pressure their activist base into adopting more moderate party positions (which can take quite some time to achieve), leading to policies being adjusted only after some delay, at timepoint t3. Often policy change only happens after a second bad election outcome (somewhere along arrow 3), which occurs at a timepoint not shown on the schema. This restores voter–party congruence (arrow 4) in the eyes of previous supporters who, at the ensuing election (at timepoint t3) reward the party for its improved (to their eyes) policy stances, restoring party support (arrow 5). But this strips party leaders of the argument that had previously brought their activist base to toe the leadership line (arrow 6), and brings us back to arrow 1.

Note that there is no theoretical or empirical reason why arrow 6 should be traveled immediately following arrow 5. The point reached at the end of arrow 5 is a point of equilibrium and there is nothing in our theorizing to suggest how much time will pass before party policies again start to diverge from supporter preferences (hence the appearance of a "+" sign after the t3 indicator at the end of arrow 5). A successful party leader might be able to delay that divergence for a considerable period, perhaps indefinitely.

Two things about the process illustrated in Figure 22.1 make its causal nature readily identifiable statistically. First, the passage of time is involved. Parties respond to voter signals only after a palpable delay, meaning we do not rely for evidence of causality on the weak standard of "constant conjunction" (things that happen together may be causally connected) but on the more stringent standard of "Granger causality" (a cause must precede its consequence). Second, the process accords with a range of empirical findings regarding the responsiveness of national policymaking to voter preferences, showing negative feedback from an earlier time-point as policymakers "correct" their policies in light of changing public preferences (e.g., Wlezien 1995; Jennings and John 2009; for a survey see Wlezien 2018). Negative feedback makes it easy to distinguish the responses of policymakers from the signals given by voters, since their coefficients have different signs.

Franklin and Lutz (2020) used left–right locations of parties as surrogates for policy positions and focused on whether parties "corrected" those locations in response to supporter signals. I do the same in the online appendix to this chapter, using respondent judgments to code party positions and taking votes cast as the signals most relevant to party leaders (details, methodological concerns and robustness checks are in the online appendix).

The original contribution of the present chapter is to suggest a related feedback loop that connects the rate of voter turnout with the rate of party support. The intuition is that, when previous supporters "punish" their party by withdrawing electoral support, those previous supporters do not necessarily vote for a different party. More often they simply fail to vote at all. So failures by party leaders to propose policies their voters support do not just cost those parties seats in their country's legislature but may cost the entire political system the votes of many citizens, lowering the turnout rate.[4] This will tend to happen when the largest party(ies) —generally the one(s) seen to have "won" the previous election—lose(s) support. The linkage is not a logical necessity. It might be absent in particular instances. But it appears to be present sufficiently often as to produce the findings regarding turnout contained in this chapter's online appendix. Elections in democracies are very public events and enthusiasm (or the lack of it) are both of them contagious, presumably helping to keep the stimulus to voter turnout in sync across supporters of different parties.

In this Handbook chapter there is not space to describe the exploratory party-level analyses that have suggested the form taken by a model that matches, for turnout, the analyses conducted by Franklin and Lutz (2020) for party support. Such a model will be presented in this chapter's online appendix. In this chapter I mainly address the implications of the party-level turnout findings for individual-level turnout analyses, also the focus of much previous turnout research. Those analyses will explore the individual-level mechanism by which previously higher turnout rates might be restored. Given the party-level findings, voter-party issue congruence should be involved. Following Plutzer (2002), partisanship should also play a role. Partisanship has sometimes been included in individual-level models, though only occasionally. It is generally excluded by scholars because it "eats up" such a large proportion of effects on turnout that pass by way of partisanship as an intervening variable. To the best of my knowledge, voter–party congruence has never previously been included in such analyses. My conjectures regarding the impact of party-level feedback for turnout suggest that both partisanship and congruence are essential for well-specified models at the individual level.

The mechanism I propose involves changes in the complexion of a country's electorate that would occur between t1 and t3 in Figure 22.1. A relevant way in which the t3 electorate will differ from the t1 electorate is that, at t3, *all* of the citizens who, at t1, were learning the habit of voting (or not), will have moved out of the category of impressionable young adults and been transformed into habitual voters (or non-voters). Their passage through this socializing process will have been shaped by their experiences of elections held during that two-election period. For those individuals, these elections will have been formative. If the elections were hard-fought, more of the young adults concerned will have acquired the strong partisanship associated with the habit of voting than if those elections were foregone conclusions. In that manner, position in the party-level feedback loop will have become embedded in the individual-level "footprint" that formative elections leave within the age-structure of an electorate (Franklin 2004: 43).

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[4] At the party level there is no empirical difference between the variable measuring turnout and the variable measuring party choice. Party support can be interpreted in either way, although the lag structure for a turnout model can differ from the lag structure for a party support model. The ambiguity of the party-support variable in a model such as that employed by Franklin and Lutz (2020) signals what has always been a troubling disconnect between the turnout literature (including my own contributions) and the party-choice literature. After all, turning out to vote involves picking a party to vote for, as originally pointed out by Campbell et al. (1960: 96–97). Here I bring the two strands of literature together for perhaps the first time since that pathbreaking study.

But note that, when we include independent variables in a model because of their relevance at a different level of analysis, apparent effects may rather reflect the process that is underway at that different level than play a causal role. The ambiguity regarding the roles of particular coefficients calls for careful interpretation of apparent effects, not only for variables from a different level of analysis. It is quite a general problem of interpretation like others that I now address.

Problems of Analysis and Interpretation

The countries on which I focus in this chapter are a subset of the 22 countries that were studied in my (2004) volume *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies Since 1945*. Those 22 countries are the only ones that have held elections continuously since within one electoral cycle of the end of World War II. I avoided countries that experienced non-democratic rule during the lifetimes of 2004 citizens because the mechanisms of long-term turnout change that I documented in that volume are primarily processes of generational replacement, as older cohorts of voters are replaced by newly adult cohorts at election after election. Newly adult cohorts have not yet established a habit of voting, giving them malleability in the face of influences that differ from those that governed the learning of older cohorts, with consequences for the equilibrium turnout-level that may shift over time. Such influences are well understood in established democracies, but as soon we include countries that transitioned to democracy (or had non-democratic periods) during the lifetimes of adult citizens, we introduce contaminants that are specific to each country and which are in any case not well understood.

In my (2004) volume I mainly employed election-level aggregate data, though this was supplemented by survey findings to the extent that surveys were available. Just six of the 22 countries had histories of academic voter studies covering enough elections to make time-series analyses feasible at the electoral-cohort level. As I revisit this subfield 20 years later I find twice that number of countries (within my set of 22) with a useable sequence of voter studies, so in this chapter I employ mainly survey data. The 14 countries on which I focus are Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. See Franklin (2004) and this chapter's online appendix for details. I merge the surveys with aggregate data mainly from IDEA Voter Turnout Database and the PARLGOV database of parties, elections, and governments.[5] Additional data sources are reported in Appendix B of my (2004) volume.

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[5] The IDEA database does not include more than a single election during any calendar year for any one country so I used the ParlGov archive to fill some gaps. US turnout has always caused problems for comparative studies (Franklin 2004: 86–88) because voter registration in that country is lower than elsewhere. Contemporary scholars employ Voter Eligible Turnout (VEP) for the US (percent voting out of those eligible to vote) even as they use turnout as a percentage of registered voters elsewhere. My VEP turnout data for the US are taken from Michael McDonald's United States Elections Project website (http://www.electproject.org/national-1789-present—accessed in September 2020).

Survey data at the individual level has the huge disadvantage of overstating the level of turnout, due to non-response and overreporting (Dahlgaard et al. 2019). This problem can be mitigated by weighting the survey data to official turnout, as I have done in past work and do in this chapter,[6] allowing me to benefit from survey data's primary advantage: it permits researchers to look within electorates at population subgroups theoretically expected to be especially susceptible to effects of different types. In particular, my (2004) volume theorized and then tested the special susceptibility of newly adult voters to short-term effects such as those of electoral clarity and margin of victory. In order to distinguish long-term from short-term effects for countries lacking survey data, I used election-level data in conjunction with a weighting strategy that incorporated the fluctuating sizes of newly adult cohorts, thus giving each such cohort a distinct "signature," in terms of those fluctuations, that could be used to identify particular cohorts even as they aged (for details, see Franklin 2004: 122–126). The findings reported in the present chapter replicate those earlier findings but do so while using data that allows new cohorts of voters to be identified by their birthdates, improving accuracy as well as transparency.[7]

Unfortunately, one of the variables found important in my earlier research (female suffrage extensions) sees no variation over the countries and periods for which I have survey data. So, I cannot validate my findings regarding that variable. Critical election studies are missing for the only country (Switzerland) that extended votes to women over recent decades.

To distinguish long-term from short-term forces at the individual level I take advantage of the fact, already noted, that ephemeral effects are registered primarily by newly adult cohorts of voters—individuals who have not yet acquired settled voting habits that would insulate them from such effects. Long-term forces, by contrast, are those that have become "baked-in" to the behavior of voters who have already acquired habits of voting (or of non-voting).[8] Whether a particular force is short term or long term at any given point in time is effectively a matter for empirical assessment, but the way in which that assessment is made is different for survey data than it is for aggregate data. With party-level aggregate data (as used by Franklin and Lutz 2020) one can identify a short-term force from the rapid decay of its effect as the turnout series moves back towards its long-term equilibrium. With the individual-level survey data that I will use in the following two sections, I can identify short-term forces as ones whose effects are felt primarily by newly adult cohorts of voters. But the fact that these forces are distinguished in such very different ways at different levels of analysis must be kept in mind when associating party-level effects with their individual-level counterparts.[9]

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[6] Increasing the weight of respondents who did not vote while reducing the weight of voting counterparts matches the sizes of each group to those in the voting population. Unfortunately, hierarchical modeling procedures can seldom handle weights within strata, so I am obliged to use regression models that employ a battery of country dummies to enforce fixed effects.

[7] Transparency is also improved by presenting survey findings at the individual level, rather than aggregated to the level of electoral cohorts. This requires that I get my measure of past voting from answers to the question whether respondents voted in the previous election (what I refer to as a "quasi-lagged" outcome) rather than from each cohort's actual vote at the previous election; and recall of past vote will be overstated in survey data in the same way as recall of the recent election's vote. But the same weighting strategy should deal with both problems. The online appendix has details.

[8] The number of times the same choice needs to be repeated in order for it to become habitual is not definitively established. Franklin (2004) followed Butler and Stokes (1969) in supposing the effective number to be 3 while Johnston et al. (2005), along with Bruter and Harrison (2020) fastened on 2. In practice, defections from habitual behavior decline with each repetition of the behavior concerned, so the cut-point is somewhat arbitrary. In this chapter, for consistency with party level findings, I treat voters as newly adult when facing either of their first two elections. Findings are not dissimilar if other definitions are employed (see this chapter's online appendix).

Perhaps the most consequential analysis problem still facing scholars who would try to understand the mainsprings of voter turnout variation is highlighted by the question, "In turnout studies, what is a well-specified model?" Most studies of voter turnout focus either on the individual level, and ask why people vote, or, they focus on the election level, asking why turnout sits at a given rate and why that rate varies across countries and/or over time. Earlier sections of this chapter make it clear that the party level is another level at which it is appropriate to ask (at the very least) why the turnout rate (average party support) varies over time. In my (2004) volume I tried to demonstrate that models at the individual level of analysis would be mis-specified if they did not include variables detailing the character of the elections at which turnout was measured; similarly, the brunt of the entire book was to demonstrate that individual-level forces (especially generational replacement) affected turnout at the aggregate level. Those demonstrations appear to have gone largely unnoticed. Over the subsequent 17 years, to the best of my knowledge, turnout models at each level have largely failed to include measures originating at the other level of analysis (an exception is the closeness of the race, frequently included in individual-level turnout models).

In this chapter I want to make my point in more dramatic language: the problem with individual-level models of why people vote is that they do not explain either the rate of turnout or that rate's variation over time, including its decline in many countries that began during the final quarter of the twentieth century.[10] The first thing we need to do in order to explain change in turnout-rate over time, using individual-level data, is to insert a measure of past voting into the model. But, when we do that, the effect of age immediately becomes non-significant, statistically, and the effect of age-squared changes its sign—becoming positive (see Table 22.1, Model A, in the next section). The remainder of this chapter is much concerned with producing better models, with the object of ultimately rendering both age and age-squared non-significant, statistically—elaborating those variables by treating them as constitutive terms in age-related interactions that clarify their functioning (see the online appendix for details).

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[9] A further methodological problem for individual-level turnout analyses is that the dependent variable is binary and, in political science research, with such outcomes it is common practice is to employ probit or logit analysis. However, the non-linearity of the dependent variable in such analyses makes it problematic to include interaction terms (Ai and Norton 2003; Buis 2010), which I need if I am to distinguish effects on new cohorts of voters from effects on older cohorts. This problem is overcome if, instead of logit models, I employ linear probability models (which use OLS regression). Such models are widely used by econometricians (Kennedy 2008; Angrist and Pischke 2008) and it can be shown that findings are hardly different when using one method rather than the other. Robustness checks using logit are provided in the online appendix.

[10] It was long ago pointed out that trying to explain the level of turnout would be a rather quixotic enterprise (Groffman 1993) and that political scientists would do better to emulate economists who focus on explaining change in their variables of interest.

Table 22.1 Effects of Age and Partisanship on the Decision to Vote (Fixed Effects Linear Probability Models with Data Weighted to Official Turnout)

Outcome: Voted or not	**Model A Age**	**Model B + Partisanship**	**Model C + Proximity**	**Model D + Demographics**
Inputs:	Coef. (s.e.)	Coef. (s.e.)	Coef. (s.e.)	Coef. (s.e.)
1) Quasi-lagged outcome (0–1)	0.26 (0.00)	0.26 (0.00)	0.25 (0.00)	0.25 (0.00)
Long-term effects (should be statistically significant in row 2)				
2) Partisanship (strength of attachment (0–3 recoded 0–1)			0.15 (0.00)	0.15 (0.00)
3) Proximity to party (left-right; 0–1)				0.01 (0.01)ns
4) Newly adult at recent election (0,1)	–0.03 (0.00)	–0.10 (0.00)	–0.11 (0.01)	–0.08 (0.01)
Short-term interactions (should be statistically significant in rows 5–6)				
5) New*partisanship			0.04 (0.01)	0.04 (0.01)
6) New*proximity				–0.05 (0.01)
Demographic and knowledge covariates (should not be statistically significant in rows 7–8)				
7) Age	–0.01 (0.02)ns	0.07 (0.03)ns	0.07 (0.03)ns	0.06 (0.03)ns
8) Age-squared	0.12 (0.02)	–0.05 (0.03)ns	–0.05 (0.03)ns	–0.05 (0.03)ns
9) Education (highest level recoded 0–1)	0.09 (0.00)	0.07 (0.00)	0.08 (0.00)	0.03 (0.00)
10) Religion (0, 1=named)	0.03 (0.00)	0.04 (0.00)	0.04 (0.00)	0.08 (0.00)
11) Marital status (0, 1=married)	0.09 (0.00)	0.12 (0.00)	0.12 (0.00)	0.11 (0.00)
12) Income (quintiles, recoded 0–1)	0.07 (0.00)	0.02 (0.00)	0.03 (0.00)	0.02 (0.00)
13) Knowledge (average of 0,1 battery)	0.13 (0.00)	0.08 (0.01)	0.08 (0.01)	0.07 (0.00)
14) Union member in family (0, 1=yes)	0.02 (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)ns
15) Demographic interactions with New	NO	YES	YES	YES
16) Fixed effects	YES	YES	YES	YES
Constant	0.25 (0.01)	0.29 (0.01)	0.43 (0.01)	0.26 (0.01)
R-squared	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.25
Countries	12	12	12	12
Observations	267,499	267,499	267,499	267,499

Note: All coefficients signifiedcant at .001, two-tailed except where marked ns (not significant). All variables standardized to range from 0 to 1. Re "Quasi-lagged outcome" see footnote 7. For demographic interactions with New see online appendix. All variables measured at the individual level of aggregation except those in Row 16.

Understanding Individual-Level Concomitants of Turnout Evolution

How does dynamic turnout equilibration at the party level show itself at the individual level? Table 22.1's Model A shows coefficients estimating the effects of the quasi-lagged outcome, demographic and knowledge indicators, and an indicator for recently adult respondents. That last indicator's coefficient is negative, as expected, but surprisingly small.[11] Interactions of what are sometimes called "main effects" (Brambor et al., 2006, would rather see us describe them as "constitutive terms") with this indicator in Models B and C show how different are effects for newly adult respondents than for established cohorts. The constitutive terms taken separately show effects on respondents who are *not* newly adult. Consistent with similar labels used in my (2004) volume, effects of these constitutive terms taken alone are labeled "long-term effects." Short-term effects are not labeled as such in the table. We get those by adding "short-term interactions" to corresponding long-term effects. So, for example, the short-term effect of partisanship in Row 5 of Model C is 0.04 greater than its long-term effect of 0.15 in Row 2). Short-term forces apply to cohorts that are not expected to have yet acquired settled habits of voting or non-voting. For them, effects can result in behavioral differences from one time-point to the next—differences that can thus bring immediate turnout change. Older individuals, by contrast, are expected to be "stuck in their ways," so that they will display the effects of long-term forces as behavioral differences between one age cohort and the next—differences that should only bring turnout change through generational replacement. Of course, it is possible for a variable to have both long-term and short-term effects, in which case the short-term component is expected to dissipate as newly adult cohorts move beyond their habit-forming phase under the influence of factors identified by Plutzer (2002).

A critical difference between this measurement strategy and the strategy employed in party-level models is that, here, the time-horizon for individual-level short-term effects is encoded in the data, whereas at the party level this horizon can be determined empirically (the individual-level time horizon was chosen to match a t-2 horizon found empirically at the party level, as already mentioned—see Figure 22.1 and the online appendix).

Models B to D progressively add, first, interactions of demographic variables with the newly-adult indicator, then respondent-reported strength of partisanship for the party to which they feel most attached;[12] and, finally, proximity to the party to which they feel closest in left–right terms. Happily, interactions with the recently adult indicator (Row 15) resolve the problem of incorrectly signed age effects, which fail to reach significance in Models B-D (but in these models we use a very demanding level of significance; greater progress toward eliminating residual age effects is made in Table 22.2 below). Moreover the effect of being newly adult, which is implausibly small in Row 4 of Model A, is boosted to a more plausible magnitude in Models B-D. However, this coefficient does not decline when the partisanship indicator is added in Model C, telling us that acquisition of partisanship does not account for any of the effects of aging as some scholars might have supposed.

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[11] The small size of the newly adult coefficient suggests another specification error, additional to the counter-intuitive age effects. This will be a topic for the next section of this chapter.

[12] Using respondents as experts and employing their judgments to code party locations might be thought problematic, but our theory focuses on voter perceptions not actual party locations.

By contrast, the addition of left-right congruence in Model D does significantly reduce the newly adult effect, suggesting that it might be proximity rather than partisanship that is associated with relevant effects of aging. Model D actually shows a negative effect of congruence, among new cohorts of voters if we take the interaction in Row 6 with its corresponding long-term effect in Row 3 (0.01–0.05 = –0.04). The negative sign might surprise but the effect appears to play no causal role, rather signaling a feature of new cohorts of voters: that they are generally located further in left–right terms from the parties that are vying for their votes (this makes sense if young adults are still learning where the different parties stand).

The negative short-term effect of proximity among the newly adult also tells us that this variable displaces the age effect quite otherwise than through collinearity with turnout, the generally expected mechanism. Importantly, the passage of time appears to be involved in this substitution. Older voters see strong effects of partisanship (0.15 in Models C and D, Row 2) seemingly because those older voters were once themselves newly adult and, at that time, experienced *their own* transitions to habitual voting. During such transitions, it only makes sense that finding a proximate party (or not) should play an important role, encouraging the acquisition of partisanship (or not).[13] Our party-level model in Figure 22.1 suggested that such young adults will be the focus of more intense mobilization efforts in some circumstances than in others, thus producing a larger number of strong partisans in some circumstances than in others.

Coefficients associated with this transition might appear surprisingly small; but we should bear in mind that survey error serves to mute individual-level coefficients compared to their aggregate-level counterparts.[14]

CONSIDERING ELECTION-LEVEL INPUTS TO TURNOUT MODELS

The main contribution of my (2004) volume to voting studies was incorporating individual-level sources of dynamic turnout change into election-level models of voter turnout. The present chapter has looked more deeply at those sources and suggested the existence of additional relevant dynamic processes at the party level of analysis. In this section I replicate election-level findings from my (2004) volume at the individual level of analysis,[15] and add variables suggested by party-level findings. I do this to establish (1) whether effects identified

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[13] The transmutation of low proximity into high partisanship over the course of two electoral cycles elaborates Plutzer's (2002) finding by suggesting a route by which well-endowed young adults acquire their partisanship (through finding a party they feel close to in left–right terms).

[14] Still, effects for partisanship of 0.19 among newly adult voters (adding the terms in rows 2 and 5 of Model D) are not very different from equivalent party-level effects in the online appendix.

[15] One of those findings (female suffrage extensions) cannot be replicated with a dataset that covers a later period in time, as already mentioned.

Table 22.2 Long-Term and Short-Term Effects on the Decision to Vote (Fixed Effects Linear Probability Models with Data Weighted to Official Turnout)

Outcome: Voted or not:	**Model A: Election- and individual-level effects**	**Model B: Adding party-level effects**	**Model C: Adding demographics covariates**
Inputs	Coef. (s.e.)	Coef. (s.e.)	Coef. (s.e.)
1) Quasi-lagged outcome	0.30 (0.00)	0.29 (0.00)	0.26 (0.00)
Long-term effects (should be statistically significant in rows 6–12)			
2) Partisanship (strength of attachment; 0–1)		0.16 (0.00)	0.16 (0.00)
3) Proximity to party (0–1)		0.01 (0.01)ns	0.00 (0.01)ns
4) Clarity of election (1-abs(seatShareP1–0.5))	−0.02 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)ns	−0.05 (0.01)
5) Marginality (1-(seatShareP1-seatShareP2))	0.02 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)ns
6) Time-gap from previous election (rescaled 0–1)	0.03 (0.01)	0.04 (0.01)	0.05 (0.01)
7) Cohesive party system (expert judgment: 0,1)	0.03 (0.01)	0.03 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
8) Compulsory voting (0,1)	0.12 (0.01)	0.10 (0.01)	0.12 (0.01)
9) Electorate size (registration as proportion of max)	−0.09 (0.02)	−0.09 (0.02)	0.08 (0.03)ns
10) Responsiveness of executive to legislature (0–1)	0.00 (0.02)ns	0.02 (0.02)ns	0.06 (0.02)
11) Younger eligibility to vote (at age 18; 0,1)	−0.03 (0.00)	−0.02 (0.00)	−0.02(0.00)
12) Newly adult at this / previous election (0,1)	−0.06 (0.02)	−0.04 (0.02)	−0.14 (0.02)
Short-term interactions (should be statistically significant in rows 15–16)			
13) New * partisanship		0.03 (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
14) New * proximity		−0.04 (0.01)	−0.03 (0.01)
15) New * clarity	0.12 (0.01)	0.09 (0.01)	0.15 (0.01)
16) New * marginality	0.05 (0.01)	0.05 (0.01)	0.06 (0.01)
17) New * time-gap	−0.16 (0.01)	−0.14 (0.01)	−0.12 (0.01)
18) New * cohesive	−0.00 (0.01)ns	−0.01 (0.01)ns	0.00 (0.01)ns
19) New * compulsory	0.10 (0.01)	0.09 (0.01)	0.10 (0.01)
20) New * electorate	0.17 (0.01)	0.16 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)ns
21) New * responsiveness	0.07 (0.01)	0.07 (0.01)	0.05 (0.01)
22) New * younger-eligible	−0.02 (0.01)	−0.03 (0.01)	−0.05 (0.01)

Continued

Table 22.2 Continued

Outcome: Voted or not:	**Model A: Election- and individual-level effects**	**Model B: Adding party-level effects**	**Model C: Adding demographics covariates**
Demographic and knowledge covariates (should not be statistically significant in rows 23–24)			
23) Age			–0.00 (0.02)ns
24) Age-squared			0.02 (0.03)ns
25) (More) demographics & interactions with New	NO	NO	YES
26) Fixed effects	YES	YES	YES
Constant	0.51 (0.03)	0.42 (0.03)	0.10 (0.02)
R-squared	0.21	0.22	0.25
Countries	14	14	14
Observations	267,499	267,499	261,879

Notes: All coefficients significant at p<.001, one-tailed, except where marked "ns" (not significant). SeatsShareP1 is proportion for largest party, SeatShareP2 for second-largest party. Regarding "Quasi-lagged outcome" see footnote 7. For demographic interactions with New see online appendix. Variables in Rows 4–10 and 23 measured at the election level; variables in other rows at the individual level.

at the party level survive the introduction of controls for well-established drivers of country-level turnout variations and (2) whether those controls remove the hints of specification error that were evident in Table 22.1 (see footnote 11). Table 22.2 pursues these objectives using three models. Model A replicates my (2004) analysis. Model B adds the two variables that are original to the present chapter: partisanship (strength of party attachment) and congruence (proximity in left–right terms of respondents to the party they feel closest to). Model C adds the individual-level covariates, already seen in Table 22.1 so as to produce a fully specified model that includes all types of variables ever used in turnout studies whether at the individual level, party level or election levels of analysis.

As in Table 22.1, these models identify long-term effects by constitutive terms taken alone. Short-term effects are found by adding relevant interaction coefficients (new * *constitutive term* in the table). For example, marginality is a quintessential short-term factor, because the gap in votes cast between the largest and second-largest parties changes from election to election. This variable has more than three times the effect among younger voters in Model A, as can be seen by adding the coefficients (0.02 + 0.05) in Rows 5 and 16 and comparing the result with the row 5 coefficient taken alone. Cohesiveness of the party system (legislative party discipline) is, by contrast, a quintessentially long-term factor, meaning that effects for established cohorts of voters should dominate and, indeed, its short-term component (across all models in Row 18) is not statistically different from its long-term effect.

One variable previously identified as long-term (electorate size, Row 9) fails to produce a significantly negative long-term effect in Model C (its long-term effect has the expected sign in the other models but Model C should be better specified). This variable is the only one whose effects in Model C blatantly contradict expectations derived from my (2004) analyses, suggesting that theoretical approaches underpinning expectations of lower turnout in large electorates should be revisited. Another surprise in these findings is that the time-gap since the previous election has an effect on recently adult cohorts that is opposite in sign to (and, taking the constitutive terms together, larger than) the effect found for established cohorts. Importantly, members of newly adult cohorts are more likely to vote if elections come in quick succession than if the mobilizing effects of a previous election have had time to dissipate. But the generally significant effects of short-term interactions for variables theorized to have long-term effects does not contradict previous findings, since analyses for my (2004) volume were not able to estimate short-term effects of variables theorized to be long-term in nature, due to methodological limitations already mentioned in the earlier "Problems of Analysis and Interpretation" section of this chapter. In this chapter we take a big step forward with analyses that contrast short-term with long-term effects for all variables, adding important nuance to our overall understanding of turnout effects.

Model B confirms the effects of partisanship and proximity found in the previous section of this chapter. Here we see that the long-term effect of partisanship is the strongest of any in the table. At the same time, where Row 4 of Table 22.1 saw implausibly small effects of being newly adult, the more fully-specified Model C in Table 22.2 accords better with generally understood effects of aging (residual age effects in Model C are even smaller than were seen in Table 22.1 failing to reach statistical significance even at the 0.1 level).

As has become evident, demographic effects measured in Model C are essential to obtaining election-level effects whose patterns and general magnitudes come close to according with my (2004) findings. With individual-level data it matters that models be fully specified. The same appears true for the demographic effects themselves. Model C shows only two of these, age and age-squared (additional demographic and knowledge effects can be found in the online appendix). But these are the effects that were wrongly signed in Model A of Table 22.1. Model C of Table 22.2 demonstrates that these variables, along with the recently adult indicator, become better-behaved as models become more fully-specified.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has established the need to include, in individual-level turnout models, variables from multiple levels of analysis. Without all levels being represented, models are under-specified (sometimes grievously). In particular, the inclusion of party-level variables has illuminated the dynamic processes that underlie turnout variations. It has for some time been evident to scholars that voter turnout sits in a dynamic equilibrium where the turnout rate is determined by long-term forces—forces that establish the level at which the equilibrium is maintained. What was unknown was *how* that equilibrium level of turnout was maintained.

I suggested in the section entitled "A Unified View of Party Choice, Partisanship, and Turnout." that equilibration is promoted by forces most clearly evident at the party level, where a long-term equilibrium in support for different parties is sustained by negative feedback. In that section I suggested the likely presence of associated dynamics for voter turnout, whose long-term stability seems deeply entwined with that of party support.[16] As support for a party goes up, so parties are freed to move away from the positions preferred by their voters, resulting in voter disenchantment at the following election. This lowers the turnout rate even as it stimulates parties to adjust their policies in response supporter preferences, tending to restore the previous turnout-rate. To the extent that synchronization is achieved in this way, turnout at the election level will follow the pattern of increasing and reducing electoral competition at the party level.

However surprising this may be, it is what appears to happen in practice. The online appendix tests models of turnout dynamics that feature both voter–party congruence and voter support for parties. At the party level of analysis, largely synchronized changes in left–right proximity and strength of party support produce a negative feedback loop that explains a larger percentage of turnout variability than the percentage that left–right proximity explains of variability in party support. Still, the findings must be regarded as preliminary. A two-election cycle eats up a lot of degrees of freedom, and the number of parties supplying data over that number of consecutive electoral cycles is quite limited: less than a hundred for two of the models in Online Appendix A, when using the CSES Integrated Module Dataset (CSES 2018). This limits the statistical reliability of some aspects of the findings—a primary reason for treating them as suggestive and relegating them to an appendix.

The role for party-level voter–party left–right congruence in promoting an equilibrium rate of voter turnout also raises measurement issues but, though closeness to parties in left–right terms (as judged by survey respondents) might be biased by varying amounts of wishful thinking, the reactions by parties cannot be questioned on the same grounds, since what party leaders see when they see declining voter support is surely not what they hope to see.

A larger puzzle was to find a mechanism, in survey data, that would parallel the one at the party level, where negotiations between party leaders and party activists likely account for the delay in party responses to declining voter support—the feedback that promotes an equilibrium rate of party support. Addressing that puzzle was one motivation underlying analyses presented in this chapter's section entitled "Understanding Individual-Level Concomitants of Turnout Evolution," where newly adult respondents were found to be largely distinguished from their older counterparts by their greater distance from parties in left–right terms. The resulting intuition saw Plutzer's (2002) developmental process as the required individual-level mechanism, producing negative feedback to "correct" turnout declines only after a two-election delay, matching the delay found in the party-level mechanism that "corrects" declines in party support. The slow pace of this transformation among voters is due to the slow rate at which newly adult voters acquire partisan loyalties that overcome their initial distance from parties in policy terms.

Because the timing of this individual-level transformation can be matched to the timing of the party-support negative feedback loop it seems plausible to suppose that the rate at which partisanship is acquired during this learning period responds to the extent of electoral competition that newly adult individuals experience. It makes sense that more strongly competitive elections should produce greater numbers of strong partisans (after the relevant delay), though micro-foundations of the control mechanism are still poorly identified. This should be an urgent focus for future research, with analyses employing Plutzer's methodological innovations together with variables that include party-level measures of electoral competition.

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[16] For additional perspectives on the maintenance of party system stability, see Weber and Franklin (2018).

The chapter section entitled "Considering Election-Level Inputs to Turnout Models" (this chapter's final substantive section) introduced election-level variables previously found to set the long-term equilibrium turnout rate. These do not explain away the individual-level effects of variables responsible for turnout re-equilibration. Rather, if anything, the opposite occurs: the addition of partisanship to the election-level analysis, in Model B of Table 22.2, somewhat reduces (on balance) observed long-term effects of classic election-level turnout determinants, even while clarifying the individual-level processes that underpin apparent age effects.

The derivative nature of individual-level turnout covariation discovered in this chapter suggests that future research should reappraise the direction of causality commonly assumed for other supposed individual-level sources of turnout evolution, subjecting classic individual-level turnout covariates to the same sort of interpretative lens as has, in this chapter, been used to study individual-level concomitants of party-level effects. If we do so we may find that individual-level turnout differences across such variables as education and political knowledge rather reflect higher-level turnout differences than cause them, as we have found to be the case with voter–party congruence.

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CHAPTER 23

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

JOAKIM EKMAN AND ERIK AMNÅ

WHAT is "civic engagement?" In an overview of existing definitions, Adler and Goggin (2005) conclude that there is no single agreed-upon meaning of civic engagement in the literature. It does not mean that all definitions are broad and all-encompassing, including just about everything from voluntary work and organizational involvement to electoral participation. One can certainly find more confined definitions that restrict civic engagement to very specific action, such as community service or collective action (Adler and Goggin 2005: 238–240; Skocpol and Fiorina 1999).

The definitions that limit civic engagement to mean community service stress voluntary work in the local community as something close to a duty for all citizens, or a moral responsibility if you will. Also, Verba et al. (1995) define civic engagement as voluntary civic (rather than political) activity. Not seldom is the collective aspect taken for granted. Definitions of civic engagement as collective action assume that such engagement most often comes in the form of collaboration or joint action to improve conditions in the civil sphere (cf. Camino and Zeldin 2002: 214). At the same time, other definitions emphasize the political aspect of *civic*, and consequently equalize civic engagement with "activities that are not only collective but that are specifically political (i.e., that involve government action)" (Adler and Goggin 2005: 238).

One can perhaps think about civic engagement as a continuum, spanning from the private sphere to the formal or public sphere. The former covers individual action like helping one's neighbors or simply discussing politics, in different contexts. Activity in the public sphere encompasses collective action, like activity within a party, an organization, or interest group.

In the literature, definitions and typologies of civic engagement are thus close but not identical to definitions of political participation. A common feature of both types of engagement or involvement is the notion of an "outward looking" engagement taking place in different spheres or contexts—outside of the immediate environment of family and friends (Amnå 2012: 613), like the public sphere, the market sphere, or the civil sphere. Both concepts are closely related to that of active citizenship (cf. Lister 2007). There are a number of typologies presented in the literature, with different suggestions about what spheres or contexts are relevant (Shaw et al. 2014). While definitions of political participation typically stress the public (political or decision-making) sphere, definitions of civic engagement typically emphasize the non-political or civic sphere. At the same time, there is no clear-cut distinction between the two concepts, since definitions of civic engagement often tend to be open for (or border on) some kind of political activity:

> Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Ehrlich 2000: preface, p. vi)

Still, one could perhaps say that the core of civic engagement is about taking responsibility for more than just yourself, your family, or your closer circle of friends—it is about helping *others*, your fellow citizens (cf. Zaff et al. 2010):

> A morally and civically responsible individual recognizes himself or herself as a member of a larger social fabric and therefore considers social problems to be at least partly his or her own; such an individual is willing to see the moral and civic dimensions of issues, to make and justify informed moral and civic judgments, and to take action when appropriate. (Ehrlich 2000: introduction, p. xxvi)

In a similar fashion, in Ajaps and Obiagu (2021) the concept refers to "acting upon a heightened sense of responsibility to one's communities, which involves developing a wide range of activities including developing civic sensitivity, participation in building civil society, and benefitting the commons" (cf. Putnam 2000). Also, in line with this, Adler and Goggin suggest that civic engagement has basically to do with "how an active citizen participates in the life of a community in order to improve conditions for others or to help shape the community's future" (Adler and Goggin 2005: 241).

AN OVERSTRETCHED CONCEPT?

While it is intuitively clear that such a notion of civic engagement is not exactly the same as the notion of political participation (say, voting in elections, participating in a May Day march, or signing a political petition), it is still not obvious where "civic engagement" ends and where "political participation" begins. For that reason, it has been argued that civic engagement, or sometimes civic participation (von der Meer and van Ingen 2009), is an overstretched concept or merely a buzzword (cf. Berger 2009: 335). It has been used to cover everything from voting in elections to giving money to charity, or from bowling in leagues to participating in political rallies and marches.

More specifically, this critique has been related to the debate on social capital in the 1990s and onwards (Putnam et al. 1993). As noted by Berger (2009), Putnam popularized the notion of civic engagement when pointing out the importance of "social capital" for a vital democratic society. However, when analyzing citizens' levels of engagement, Putnam covered just about everything from reading newspapers, political participation, social networks, and interpersonal trust to associational involvement. All of this was labeled civic engagement, and the point was very simplified that such civic engagement tended to correlate with a functioning democracy and market economy (Putnam et al. 1993). Subsequently, Putnam expanded his thesis, and argued that civic engagement was on the decline in the US. American democracy was supposedly eroding from the inside (Putnam 1995, 1997, Pharr and 2000). This sparked a global debate about the future of the established democracies (Stolle 2005). But again, Putnam was somewhat unclear about what it was that was actually declining, since "civic engagement" was a bit of everything (Berger 2009).

It would seem that the tendency of including political action into definitions of "civic engagement" is rather common in more recent studies as well. For example, in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2019), civic engagement refers to a "broad set of practices and attitudes of involvement in social and political life that converge to increase the health of a democratic society." Cho, Byrne, and Pelter (2020) draws on a definition suggested by UNICEF, where civic engagement is understood as "individual or collective actions in which people participate to improve the well-being of communities or society in general," but add that this conventionally has "taken the form of actions such as voting, attending community meetings or functions, contacting public officials, attending protests, signing petitions, or writing articles about one's community." In Makki Alamdari and Bishop (2020), civic engagement is something of a catch-all concept: "political participation, volunteerism, organizational membership, monetary donation, community problem-solving, staying informed about the community, helping in one's neighborhood, and community participation." More examples can be included here, but the point is simply that there is often no clear distinction between civic engagement and political participation in existing studies.

The same goes for the kind of settings of civic engagement that have been identified in the literature. In a comprehensive overview, Shaw et al. (2014: 2–3) note that existing classifications of civic engagement—with a specific focus on young people, that is, people who are not yet full political citizens—differ between a number of activities that can take place in both formal and informal settings:

- Community service and volunteering
- Mutual aid (support to others within the same community or social group)
- Advocacy and campaigning (raising public consciousness, working to change legislation, and representation to government consultation bodies)
- Youth media (forms of media production by young people)
- Social entrepreneurship (creating innovative solutions to social problems)
- Leadership training and practice (mechanisms for learning and exercising leadership skills)

In order to demonstrate this variety of possible activities, Shaw et al. (2014: 3) suggest six settings (contexts) and exemplify how civic engagement may develop within each of these settings. The *local grassroot level* is the first of these. Here, local youth organizations may encourage a wide range of civic skills and provide opportunities for various forms of engagement. In a similar way, *schools* are important sites for the development of civic skills and participatory values and behavior. What Shaw et al. (2014) label *third-level institutions* covers colleges and universities. They can for example offer volunteering programs and membership in associations, as part of their extra-curricular activities. A fourth setting is *NGOs*, operating on any level (local, regional, national, or international). Such organizations could be instrumental to collective action. The two remaining settings are *government/political* *institutions* and *political parties*. In some countries, they are formal structures that involve young people in the political process, and political parties have youth branches.

A Thin Notion of Civic Engagement

One possible way to deal with the conceptual closeness between civic engagement and political participation has been suggested by Amnå and Ekman in a number of works (Ekman and Amnå 2012; Amnå and Ekman 2014, 2015; Amnå 2008, 2010). Quite simply, the idea is to delimit civic engagement as a distinct mode of the more general "civil participation," and remove the "political" (or public) element from the concept all together. According to the typology suggested by Ekman and Amnå (2012) and Amnå and Ekman (2014,; 2015), a basic distinction has also to do with *latent* and *manifest* forms of political activity or political behavior.

Starting with manifest political activity, the idea is simply that this label should be reserved for activities directed towards influencing governmental decisions and political outcomes (i.e., in the political sphere). In the typology, this is called *formal political participation*. Citizens vote in general elections, in order to support some parties or candidates, or to make sure others will not gain too much influence. People take part in referenda for similar reasons. To some, it may be a deliberate political act to abstain from voting in an election or a referendum, as a protest against the political order or the incumbents (cf. Torcal 2006). Or, they may cast a blank vote in an election to demonstrate political dissatisfaction. Moreover, individuals may run for office themselves, in local or national government (cf. Verba and Nie 1972; Milbrath and Goel 1977; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; Parry 1992; Brady 1999).

Membership is also a conventional form of typical political participation—in political parties, youth branches of parties, trade unions, or in organizations with a distinct political agenda, for example human rights advocacy groups or peace organizations. Formal political participation also covers *contact activities* (Teorell et al. 2007): citizens may write to politicians or civil servants, in order to try to influence the political agenda or political outcomes. *Donating money* to a political party could possibly be included in this category as well.

At the same time, political activity is not necessarily directly related to the formal political institutional framework of a country (the parliamentary sphere) or to the conventional actors within that framework (political parties, political actors, trade unions, and membership-based political organizations). In order to influence the political agenda or political outcomes, citizens may engage in extra-parliamentary forms of political participation, like demonstrations, protests, strikes, or similar collective manifestations (cf. Barnes and Kaase et al. 1979; Kaase and Marsh 1979; Topf 1995; Montero, Westholm, and van Deth 2007; Amnå and Helander 2021).

In our original typology of different forms of political activity (Ekman and Amnå 2012), a distinction was made between *legal* and *illegal* forms of extra-parliamentary activism. Legal forms of extra-parliamentary activities included participation in demonstrations, strikes, and other manifest forms of protest actions. Also, under this heading we placed membership in (or activity within) groups or parties that deliberately stand outside of the parliamentary sphere, like network-based social movements or political actions groups of various kinds.

Such activities provide its supporters with a sense of "doing something," an opportunity to personally take a stand and make a difference. The international climate school strike-movement *Fridays for Future* is a telling example. Inspired by Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg, who first received attention in 2018 for her weekly "school strikes" outside the Swedish Parliament in Stockholm to call for more decisive action on climate change, a global movement of school-strikers soon emerged: young people demanding that their political leaders take action to save the climate.

Legal extra-parliamentary activism could also be about signing or collecting petitions, handing out political leaflets, or boycotting/"buycotting." Certain brands and products are bought—or refuted —for ideological, ethical, or environmental reasons. This is a way for ordinary citizens to directly influence the people in power (not necessarily politicians), and thus a rational form of manifest political action. In the literature, such behavior is typically referred to as "political consumption" (Stolle, Hooghe, Micheletti 2005; Atkinson 2015; Rössel and Schenk 2017; Boström, Micheletti, and Oosterveer 2019).

In addition to such legal political activism, Ekman and Amnå (2012) suggested a typology that covered unlawful (or illegal) extra-parliamentary political activities as a distinct category. Here, participating in illegal demonstrations or violent protests bordering on riots would fit, alongside certain civil disobedience acts and squatting buildings. Other forms of illegal political action could encompass animal liberation groups that set animals free, or attack stores selling furs, or laboratories where animal testing is conducted.

In the present chapter, the distinction between legal and illegal forms of activism has been abandoned. As pointed out by Carneiro (2015), there is a risk that this distinction upholds a conservative notion of "conventional" forms of political action being more legitimate than non-conventional or non-institutional forms of political participation (cf. van Deth 2001; Brussino, Rabbia, and Sorribas 2008; Theocharis and van Deth 2019). Moreover, what is legal and illegal varies over time and between political regimes. For these reasons, in order to classify different forms of political activism in a conceptual framework, a distinction between violent and non-violent activism is probably more adequate.

So far, we have covered manifest forms of "actual" or "formal" political participation, such as voting or being a member of a political party, as well as "new" forms of political participation, like being involved in social movements, engaging in extra-parliamentary political protests, or boycotting and political consumption. This entails a broad yet distinct understanding of the concept; but even more important for the present chapter, opens up for a more distinct understanding of "civic engagement" as well.

Civil Participation and Civic Engagement

If we want to understand the conditions for active citizenship in contemporary societies—for example, in empirical studies of declining levels of political participation, low electoral turnout or eroding public confidence in representative democracy (cf. Pharr and Putnam 2000; Norris 2002)—we must not overlook other forms of political activity, aside from "political participation." People engage in society in a number of ways that do not formally relate to the political (parliamentary) domain and in ways that are clearly not any sort of political protest—but that nevertheless could be seen as pre-political or participation-relevant.

Drawing on Ekman and Amnå (2012), we will refer to such activities as "civil participation," and make a further distinction between "social involvement" and "civic engagement."

The main point here is that civic engagement should be understood as a label for activities that are in fact very different from other types of political activities, in the sense that the former do not relate at all to the formal (or institutional) political–parliamentary sphere, with political parties and political decision-making, be it on the local or national level. Focus is elsewhere.

We thus reserve civic engagement for *activities* by ordinary citizens that are intended to influence circumstances in society that is of relevance to others, outside their own family and circle of close friends (cf. van Deth 2001; Zukin et al. 2006; Theocharis and van Deth 2019), but also outside of the formal political sphere (cf. Adler and Goggin 2005: 241). For example, people engage in society in a number of different ways: they discuss politics, follow political issues, write to editors, donate money, and recycle for environmental reasons. People do voluntary work to help others. People get organized to solve local problems or to improve conditions for certain groups in society. Also, the distinction is made to point out that there are limits to what we would refer to as "political participation." Not everything fits this category. Recycling, for example, even if done for environmental reasons, is not political participation in the typology suggested by Ekman and Amnå (2012), since the action is not directly aimed at any specific actor (like a boycott, for example). Rather, recycling for environmental reasons could be seen as an act of civic engagement.

Involvement and Interest in Society

What we referred to above as "civil participation" covers another aspect as well, namely *attention* to—and *interest* in—political and societal issues. This category encompasses the feeling or awareness of being a member of society, of being a part of a community. We call this *social involvement*. Involvement may be seen as something that (theoretically) precedes both "civic" and "political" activities. While civic engagement and political participation refer to specific actions, involvement refers to *attentiveness* to social and political issues (Martín and van Deth 2007: 303–304).

Is this dimension really needed? One could, like Berger (2009) argue that the very notion of "engagement" includes a *combination* of *attentiveness* and *action*. However, by including "social involvement" as a separate sub-category, we relate more closely to the literature on political participation; it has been argued that "involvement" should be understood as a distinct dimension of democratic participation. Citizens may be more or less "involved" in society, that is, be curious or interested in political and societal affairs. Without such a basic curiosity, citizens would not pay attention to political and civic affairs, learn about the political process, or formulate opinions (Armingeon 2007; van Deth, Montero, and Westholm 2007; Ehrlich 2000).

Moreover, "social involvement" should be analytically distinguished from "civic engagement" since we are dealing with two distinctly different empirical phenomena. Employing the strategy suggested by Martín and van Deth, we may measure "involvement" by two standard survey items: the respondents' interest in politics and societal affairs, and the respondents' perception of politics being important. Civic engagement on the other hand is typically measured by self-reported *activities* within the civil society sphere (Martín and van Deth 2007: 312).

Table 23.1 Civil and Political Participation: Categories and Subcategories (Examples)

Civil participation (latent political activity)		Political participation (manifest political activity)		
Social involvement (attention)	Civic engagement (action)	Formal political participation	Extra-parliamentary political participation	
			Non-violent forms	Violent forms
Taking an interest in politics Perceiving politics and societal affairs as important	Giving money to charity Discussing societal or political issues, online or offline Actively seeking information about politics and society (in newspapers, TV, or on the internet) Recycling Volunteering in social work, e.g. to support women's shelters or help homeless people Charity or faith-based community work Activity within other community-based organizations	Voting in elections and referendums Running for office Membership and activity within parties, trade unions, and organizations Contact and donating activities	Demonstrations Protests, strikes Manifestations Political consumption Civil disobedience	Violent marches or street protests Animal liberation attacks on private property

We thus end up with the following forms or types of orientations and activities, that seem to be of direct relevance for our understanding of "civic engagement" and "political participation" (Table 23.1).

It should be noted that we do not necessarily think about the different concepts as part of a *model*, with an underlying causality. Manifest "political participation" does not necessarily presuppose active "civic engagement" (latent political activity). It could very well be the case that different forms of societal or civic engagement would be strongly correlated with more specific political activities, but that is ultimately a question for empirical testing (cf. next section). Here, we are primarily interested in making a clear conceptual/theoretical distinction between "civic engagement" and "political participation." This would entail a way of ordering our thinking in terms of the different types of phenomena we can empirically investigate, for example with the help of public opinion surveys.

Of course, it could very well also be the case that civic engagement is a necessary but not in itself sufficient condition for political participation—other individual or institutional political opportunity structures may be needed as well for actual political action. This logic has been suggested by Berger (2009):

> Must citizens be politically engaged all the time or only episodically? Perhaps liberal democracies can flourish with relatively low levels of political engagement if they also feature continuously high levels of [non-political] engagement – which can be channeled into political engagement should the circumstances warrant – and political institutions able to process that episodic engagement and respond satisfactorily. (Berger 2009: 345)

If this was proved to be correct, in empirical studies across countries and across time, one could stress the idea about "latent" and "manifest" participation in more definite terms. Here, we have merely suggested the notion of civic engagement as "latent" political participation, chiefly in relation to a conceptual discussion. Next, we will try to qualify this suggestion by looking at a few empirical studies that have explicitly focused on the relationship between civic and political engagement.

Empirical Findings: Assessments of Civic Engagement and the Enhancement of Democracy

The notion of civic engagement (engagement in voluntary associations) as a resource for democracy and society (Putnam 1993, Pharr and Putnam 2000; Fung 2003; Binder and Freytag 2013; Flanagan 2014) has for a long time been a matter of dispute. Theoretically, the logic is straightforward: civic engagement may foster political interest, efficacy, and skills that matter for active political participation. Empirical evidence is less straightforward (Wollebaek and Stolle 2002; Quintelier 2008; Dekker 2014; Kamerāde, Mohan, and Sivesind 2015; van Ingen and Bekker 2015; Ferrucci et al. 2020; Kim et al. 2017; Gil de Zúñiga et al. 2016; Pasek et al. 2009). For example, following Putnamn et al. (1993), Wollebaek and Stolle (2002) have tested the importance of face-to-face contacts in voluntary associations, in order to foster social capital. In their study, they look at three dimensions of associational involvement: intensity (active versus passive participation); scope (belonging to many versus few affiliations); and type (non-political versus involvement with a distinct political purpose). They conclude that associational involvement or participation matters, but that active participation is not necessarily the key. Passive affiliations may also foster social capital.

In this context, the studies by van der Meer and van Ingen (2009), and van Ingen and van der Meer (2016) are particularly instructive. They have tested the Tocquevillian—or neo-Tocquevillian (Binder 2021: 47–48) —idea of engagement in voluntary associations being "schools of democracy," but concluded that "pools of democracy" would be a more apt description. There is a tendency in this context for self-selection (more civic-minded individuals are more likely to join voluntary associations than others), and thus, it becomes a matter of a "reservoir" of civic-minded people rather than some kind of socialization effect. In short, involvement in associations becomes "pools of democracy" rather than "schools of democracy" (van der Meer and van Ingen 2009; van Ingen and van der Meer 2016).

In van der Meer and van Ingen (2009), the two authors present an overview of the literature on the supposedly beneficial role of voluntary associations in a democratic society, from which five claims are derived, which are subsequently empirically tested. Above all, is there in fact, as has been claimed from Putnam and onwards (cf. Wollebaek and Stolle 2002), a strong positive relationship between civic engagement and political action?

Drawing on public opinion survey data from 17 countries (the European Social Survey 2002 and 2003), the test of the relationship between civic engagement and political participation is thus on the individual level (assuming that the relevant casual mechanism has to do with face-to-face interaction between citizens). In the study, civic engagement (or civic participation) covers three types of associations: leisure organizations (sport clubs or cultural associations), interest organizations (trade unions or consumer organizations), and activist organizations, like environmental groups or humanitarian/peace organizations (cf. van der Meer et al. 2009). As for mode of involvement, the authors look at, for each type of organization, passive membership, active participation, voluntary work, and donating money.

The conclusion is that there seem to be a strong (positive) correlation between involvement in voluntary associations (i.e., civic engagement) and political action in all 17 countries analyzed in the study. The theoretical assumption would be that this is the result of socialization: by active and face-to-face participation in associations, people develop civic mindedness, political efficacy, and civic skills. This then translates into political action. However, the authors find no such evidence, aside from marginal additional effects, that there is a direct, casual relationship between involvement in voluntary associations and political action. Again, it is rather the selection effect that matters, which would explain the correlation between involvement and political action (van der Meer and van Ingen 2009).

In van Ingen and van der Meer (2016), the test is extended by using the Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS), a panel data collection representative of the population of the Netherlands (16 years and above). The idea is to shed further light on the relation between civic engagement and political socialization; but the findings actually offer only little support for the notion of voluntary associations fostering politically active citizens. Rather, the conclusion is that self-selection matters even more than the previous study indicated: politically engaged citizens are more likely than others to join voluntary associations, but also less likely to leave them. This means, then, that voluntary associations may play an important role in a democratic society, by mobilizing politically engaged citizens—or by monitoring governments (cf. Schudson 1996, 1999; Hooghe and Dejaeghere 2007; Amnå and Ekman 2014)—but voluntary associations contribute only in a modest way to actually foster politically active citizens.

In order to expand the discussion, Binder (2021) has tested the relationship between civic engagement and political participation, trying specifically to take into account self-selection effects. Drawing on the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), with panel data spanning from 1991 to 2008, Binder demonstrates that certain modes of associational involvement matter: organizational activity (more than just membership) positively impacts political participation (political party support). Still, the effects are not very strong, and results are mixed. In the end, political interest seems to matter more than associational activity, in order to predict political party support. This suggests that associational activity can stimulate political engagement, but that other factors are more relevant if we want to explain the level of intensity of such engagement. Thus, Binder finds that the notion of voluntary associations as "schools of democracy" is still relevant, at least to some extent. There seem to be a positive association between civic engagement and political involvement, after all. For example, looking specifically at individuals that initially were not supportive of political parties and not interested in politics, associational membership may increase political interest and trigger at least some political engagement (Binder 2021: 67).

As indicated above, it is important here—and directly relevant for the "schools or pools of democracy" debate—to distinguish between *different forms* of voluntary associations. In the literature on associational involvement and the benefits for society and democracy, there has been a tendency to group different types of associations together, thereby neglecting important aspects of the supposed link between voluntary involvement and political outcomes. In order to avoid this simplification, van der Meer et al. (2009) have suggested that one needs to make a distinction between at least three different types of voluntary associations, existing in-between the intimate sphere (the family), the market sphere (the economy), and the state (the political sphere). Based on the primary focus of the associations, the suggested typology in this way covers: (1) *leisure organizations,* like sport clubs and recreational activities; (2) *interest organizations*, focusing on the interests of their members, say, in relation to the market (like trade unions or consumer organizations); and (3) *activist organizations*, like environmental groups focusing on changing the conduct of individuals and society.

Putting this typology to an empirical, cross-national test, based on data from the European Social Survey, van der Meer et al. (2009) demonstrate that failure to make a distinction between the different types is likely to cancel out the effect of associational involvement on political action, since involvement in activist organizations is more strongly related to political participation and political trust, compared to involvement in leisure or interest organizations. Moreover, other empirical observations that matter for the "schools or pools of democracy" debate will be overlooked unless a distinction between different types of associations is made. For example, women are less likely to participate in leisure and interest organizations than men, but more likely to get involved in activist organizations (van der Meer et al. 2009: 238).

Concluding Remarks

To conclude this chapter, even if "civic engagement" occasionally stands out as something of a catch-all concept in the literature, there still seem to be a common understanding among different scholars about what civic engagement is actually good for. It is about activities that are "not necessarily political in nature, but do, in their sum, contribute to political functioning" (Ferrucci 2020). In this way, civic engagement represents an investment in a democratic society (Verba et al. 1995). In short, civic engagement fosters "ties, connections and communities in such a way that embeds individuals in a thriving relationship between the state of power and individuals, enhancing a healthier democracy" (Gil de Zúñiga et al. 2016: 536). It is about community, it is about trust. Empirical studies (see earlier) have confirmed this assumption, albeit in different ways, and with mixed results. More studies are thus needed, perhaps that combine quantitative and qualitative analyses, or studies that analyze the possible interaction between schools and universities, associational involvement, and future political participation (cf. Binder 2021: 66).

Admittedly, it could be argued that our particular understanding of "civic engagement" (see earlier) entails a very "thin" notion of the concept: it is supposedly something in-between "social involvement" (e.g., interest in and attention to societal affairs and politics), on the one hand, and actual "political participation" on the other hand (Table 23.1), a handful of manifest activities outside of the formal political sphere. These specific activities could admittedly take place in a number of different contexts or settings, like in the local community, in schools, colleges, and universities, and in organizations. Still, it is ultimately a rather narrow understanding of what civic engagement is all about. For example, this could be compared to Shaw et al. (2014: 10), who list no less than 15 different benefits that come with civic engagement. These cover individual benefits (different ways of encouraging individuals to become active agents in their own lives and in society) as well as community benefits, like the creation of joint solutions to social and civic problems or inequalities, stronger community networks, and enhanced participatory decision-making and democratic governance in community institutions. To reduce civic engagement to a limited set of possible activities (like recycling, activity within local community groups, or other forms of voluntarism) may seem trivial, to some.

However, this is precisely the point here: to suggest a notion of civic engagement that could be studied and measured in a straightforward way, and to identify the conceptual borders. What is civic engagement, and what is rather political participation? Too broad or all-encompassing notions of these two concepts are not really what we need (Berger 2009; van Deth 2001; Theocharis and van Deth 2019). Indeed, as Theocharis and van Deth put it: "How would you recognize a mode of participation if you see one?" Ultimately, it is not just about theoretical conceptual frameworks; it is also a matter of being able to study—and empirically measure—different modes of citizen engagement in society and politics.

If we, for example, are interested in declining levels of political participation in contemporary democracies, we must not overlook civic engagement as a distinct form of activity (cf. Dalton 2006: Pharr and Putnam 2000). People of all ages and from all walks of life engage socially in a number of ways, formally outside of the political domain, but nevertheless in ways that may have political consequences. People in general discuss politics, consume political news in papers and on TV or on the internet, or talk about societal issues. People are aware of global problems, like climate change, pandemics, and the poverty or HIV situation in different parts of the world. People have political knowledge and skills, and hold informed opinions about politics. Some people write to editors in local papers, debating local community affairs. Others express their opinions online using social media. Moreover, people with such attention to societal affairs probably take a more active part in society as well, in different ways. People donate money to support the building of schools or clean water delivery systems in developing countries, or to support research on cancer and heart diseases. People of all ages recycle. People organize carpools to get to work in an environmental friendly way. Thus, we need to be able to measure "civic engagement," in order to understand different forms of engagement among different groups in society, not the least among youth, ethnic minorities, and immigrants.

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CHAPTER 24

PROTEST PARTICIPATION

MARCO GIUGNI AND MARIA GRASSO

Ordinary citizens have at their disposal a limited but substantial number of options to make their voice heard in liberal democracies. They range from voting—perhaps the archetypical participatory form—to more direct activities such as attending strikes, rallies, public meetings or demonstrations, signing petitions, or more committed and high-risk activities such sit-ins, blockades, occupations, and the like (see Chapters 22–27 in this volume). In recent years, online forms have further expanded this action repertoire (see Chapter 26 in this volume). This, however, holds mainly for democratic countries. In nondemocratic countries the situation is different on at least three counts: voting is not present or severely restricted; involvement in non-electoral forms is much more risky—more likely to result in heavy repression; and online forms can often be heavily controlled and censored by the ruling elites and their representatives (see also Chapter 49 in this volume). Furthermore, as Tilly (1986, 1995) has masterfully shown, the means citizens have at their disposal—their action repertoires—are culturally and historically contingent and change over time.

This chapter examines protest participation as a distinct mode of political participation. Its role in contemporary societies cannot be underestimated and, we maintain, has become increasingly important over the years, also in relation to the decreasing importance of institutional politics, the decrease in voter turnout, and more generally what can be understood as a growing skepticism towards the institutions of representative democracy (Grasso 2016, Giugni and Grasso 2021). Moreover, scholars have argued that protest has undergone a process of normalization over time, meaning that peaceful protests have become more frequent and, above all, are perceived as a more legitimate as a way of doing politics than in the past (Dalton 2019; Fuchs 1991; Marsh and Kaase 1979; Topf 1995; Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001). This has been stressed in particular with respect to street demonstrations, which have become one of the major channels of public voice and participation in representative democracies (Norris et al. 2005), but the argument holds for other forms of protest as well (but see Caren et al. 2011 for a study questioning the normalization of protest in the case of the US).

Our goal is not so much to provide a systematic review of existing works, but rather to problematize and discuss a number of key aspects relating to the study of protest participation. In addition, we will make a number of suggestions for further research based on the account of existing works (see Giugni and Grasso 2021b for a systematic, though selective, commented review of the literature). As such, the chapter addresses four key questions: What is protest participation? How can it be studied? Who engages in it? How can it be explained? Furthermore, we discuss the role of context (see also Chapters 28–31 in this volume) for protest participation, including how patterns of protest may differ between democratic and nondemocratic states, as well as how protest participation has transformed over time, both in the long and in the shorter run.

The chapter makes two key arguments about protest participation. Firstly, concerning its definition, we stress the fact that what is meant by protest participation changes over time and therefore analytical tools must adapt to these changes. Secondly, concerning its explanation, we will show that, while there are different approaches and research traditions stressing different explanatory factors, some points of convergence exist amongst them, and therefore we need to combine these approaches and traditions in order to reach a better understanding of why and how people engage in protest activities.

Before moving on, it is important to stress that, when speaking of protest, one may refer to the macro- or micro-level of analysis. In other words, protest can be seen, and studied, as a collective phenomenon, looking for example at the number of protest events carried out in a given place in a given period of time, or at the features of such events (size, form, issues, etc.). However, they can also be seen as an individual act, observing for example the characteristics of the people who get involved in protest activities or the factors which make them more likely to participate. This chapter focuses on protest participation from a micro-level perspective, that is, individual participation in protest activities.

What is Protest Participation?

Defining protest participation is not an easy task. Broadly speaking, we can think of two main approaches to defining protest: an inductive and a deductive one. The first approach starts from a list of specific political activities that are considered as being unconventional or noninstitutional (as opposed to conventional or institutionalized forms such as voting). The most typical forms include attending public demonstrations (lawful or illegal), taking part in in strikes, and participating in sit-ins, blockades, or other confrontational actions, but often other forms are also mentioned. In their seminal study in this tradition, Barnes and Kaase (1979) include the following activities in their protest potential scale—which they then combine with conventional political participation scale in their typology of political action repertory: signing a petition; attending lawful demonstrations; joining boycotts; refusing to pay rent or taxes; occupying buildings or factories, sit-ins; blocking traffic with a street demonstration; and joining wildcat strikes.

A second, perhaps more systematic approach consists in defining a number of criteria shared by those activities that we call "protest" (see also Chapter 26 in this volume) and setting them apart from other activities that fall into other modes of participation. Political scientists dealing with political behavior tend to follow this path. For example, Dalton (2019), adapting previous work by Verba et al. (1978), has suggested distinguishing protest from other modes of activity along five dimensions: protest is characterized as having a high pressure/high information type of influence, a collective scope of outcome, being very conflictual, requiring some or much initiative, and some or much cooperation with others. In a similar vein, Teorell et al. (2007) proposed a typology of political participation whereby protest activities are seen as extra-representational, voice-based, and non-targeted. They then test their typology empirically through a principal component factor analysis. The analysis shows that the four political activities load significantly with one of the main components, which they interpret as representing protest activity: take part in a public demonstration, take part in a strike, and participate in illegal protest activities. Theocharis and van Deth (2017) follow a similar confirmatory approach and they find four items as loading on the protest component: signed a petition, worked for a political action group, joined a demonstration, and a residual category of other coded open answers.

Whether approached inductively or deductively—or a combination of both—defining protest participation is not an easy task and there is no single clear-cut definition of what is protest and what is not. Take, for example, petitioning. Many include this amongst the unconventional or unorthodox action repertoire alongside lawful demonstrations, as Dalton (2019) does, but others may contest this insofar as petitions are a very "soft" and quite conventional form of action which do not require much effort on the part of those who are asked to sign them. At times, when the new dimension of consumer participation is included, signing a petition is included in the consumer participation mode alongside boycotting and buycotting, such as in Teorell et al. (2007). However, in Theocharis and van Deth's (2017) analysis it belongs to the protest category. A similar contrasting finding applies to working for a political action group, which is also considered as a form of protest by Theocharis and van Deth (2017) and which is not considered in Teorell et al.'s (2007) analysis. More generally, one may legitimately wonder whether consumer participation is a form of protest or a distinct mode of participation. These activities tend to be individualized, whereas protest is generally seen as collective (Grasso 2016). The same could be said for digitally networked participation (for example, commenting on social media on political/social issues, posting or sharing political links on social media, or encouraging other people to take action on social media): Is it a form of protest or a distinct mode of participation? After all, a still limited but flourishing literature examines how the internet and related social media such as Facebook and Twitter can be used as a way to mount and participate in protest activities (Bennett and Segerberg 2013; Earl and Kimport 2011), including in the most typical form of protest participation, namely, attending street demonstrations (Anduiza et al. 2014) (see also Chapter 26 in this volume).

A final point to be stressed concerning the question of what is protest participation is that the latter is sometimes equated with participation in social movements. Social movements, by definition, make frequent, though not exclusive, use of a variety of protest actions (della Porta and Diani 2020). However, we see individual engagement in social movements as a broader concept, which may include protest participation but can also refer to other activities and forms of engagement and collective action such as, for example, becoming a member or a leader of a social movement organization, thus contributing resources to it, whether in terms of time or money (the so-called "paycheck activism"), and other forms. In the following, we will sometimes refer to movements and movement participation, but we mainly consider protest participation as involvement in protest activities themselves. Yet, it should be clear that the distinction can quickly become blurred if one of the mainstay ways of participating in a movement is understood as engaging in protest activities, and generally in mass demonstrations. While there is a lot of background work to the organization of these larger events involving great numbers, this tends to involve much smaller groups of highly committed activists and leaders, so the reach will be lower.

How Can Protest Participation Be Studied?

Participation in protest activities and, more generally, involvement in social movements have been studied with a variety of methodological approaches and techniques (della Porta 2014;

Klandermans and Staggenborg 2002). Two methods clearly stand out as the most often used by scholars: qualitative interviews—ranging from semi-structured interviews to biographical interviews and life histories—and quantitative surveys. While qualitative and quantitative approaches are often contrasted, these two techniques should not be seen as opposed, but rather as complementing each other, each with its strengths and weaknesses. Qualitative interviews are more suitable for understanding the subjective reasons why people participate, how they mentally link participation in protest to past events and experiences, how they reconstruct the life trajectories that lead to it, and so forth. However, they are limited in terms of generalization of the findings to a broader population. Quantitative surveys, on the other hand, allow to draw more general conclusions but are more limited in terms of the depth of such conclusions. In brief, qualitative interviews stress depth and "thick" description of specific cases, while quantitative surveys aim at generalizations and comparisons. This, of course, holds also outside of the study of protest participation (see also Chapters 14 to 21 in this volume).

Qualitative studies based on interviews provide invaluable insights into the ways in which people become involved in protest. Put in a perhaps somewhat oversimplistic way, we could say that they are particularly helpful in answering the question of "how" people come to participate. Yet, most of the existing studies of the determinants of participation in social movements and protest activities rely on survey data. Once again somewhat simplifying a more complex picture, these can be seen as mainly geared towards answering the question "why" people participate.

Barnes and Kaase's (1979) seminal comparative study of political action repertoires across five countries is an authoritative example of how protest participation can be studied based on survey data. A number of studies have since exploited existing survey data to provide an understanding of the patterns and determinants of protest participation. For example, Schussman and Soule (2005) use the American Citizen Participation Survey to account for individual protest participation in the US. More recently, Quaranta's (2015) broad cross-national comparative analysis of protest participation in Western Europe draws empirically from the European Social Survey. Grasso (2016) looks both at data from the European Social Survey and the European Values Study in a detailed analysis of trends in political engagement and generational differences in different types of political participation, including protest activities.

General population surveys allow for the findings to be generalized beyond the specific people interviewed. Additionally, they yield information about both participants and nonparticipants, therefore allowing for testing hypotheses about the determinants of participation in social movements and protest activities. However, their heuristic power is also limited in some respects. Apart from not being particularly useful for understanding participant motivations, we can mention three further shortcomings leading to analytical obstacles from an empirical point of view. Firstly, general population surveys rely on declared rather than actual behavior, and at times on intentions to participate. Secondly, since the number of people who engage in protest is usually quite limited, general population surveys tend to yield relatively small samples of protesters, making detailed analyses by subgroups very challenging, if not impossible, due to the low sample numbers. Thirdly, general population surveys tend to measure participation in generic terms and, therefore, do not show for which issues or in which movements people participate.

To address some of these shortcomings and study protest more closely, new types of surveys have been implemented in recent years to study protest participation and overcome certain limitations of traditional population surveys: protest surveys (Fillieule and Blanchard 2010; Walgrave and Verhulst 2011). This method consists in surveying participants "caught in the act" of protesting—usually street demonstrations—that is, while they are participating (Klandermans 2012). This method has been applied in a number of studies, for example on the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001 and the 2002 European Social Forum in Florence (della Porta et al. 2006), the cross-national analysis of demonstrations against the US intervention in Iraq in 2003 (Walgrave and Rucht 2010), the protest against the 2003 G8 summit in Evian in 2003 (Fillieule et al. 2004), and the 2006 European Social Forum in Athens (della Porta 2009), just to mention a few. More recently, it has formed the methodological backbone of a large-scale comparative project of participation in street demonstrations in a number of countries. Results of this project have been reported in a number of publications, including two journal special issues (Klandermans 2012; Klandermans et al. 2014), an edited collection (Giugni and Grasso 2015), and a book monograph (Giugni and Grasso 2019a). Methodological discussions about the validity and reliability of the protest-survey data can be found in Walgrave and Verhulst (2011), Walgrave et al. (2016), and van Stekelenburg et al. (2012).

Both traditional population-survey and protest-survey data are intrinsically static and can only touch upon the processes through which people become involved in protest activities. Information about changes over time can be obtained with cross-sectional data gathered at different points in time (or asking retrospective questions), for example by creating synthetic panels and investigating generational change over time (Grasso 2014, 2016, Grasso et al. 2018; see also Grasso et al. 2017, Gray et al. 2018). Additionally, longitudinal panel surveys are also useful for this purpose. For example, Corrigall-Brown (2011) has used the youth socialization panel to examine how individual characteristics and life experiences impact the pathway of participation in social movements and protest activities. Panel data have also been used to study the effect of protest participation on the political and personal life of participants (Giugni and Grasso 2016; Sherkat and Blocker 1997), the so-called biographical consequences of activism (Passy and Monsch 2019). Nevertheless, research relying on this kind of data has remained sparse so far, not least because panel data which includes measures of protest participation are rare, and they are more costly to generate than cross-sectional survey data.

Another methodological approach, less frequently used but which is taking on an increasing importance in recent years, deserves to be mentioned: randomized experiments. Just like panel studies, and even more so, experimental data allows to make a stronger case for causal relationships, for example between certain individual characteristics—sociodemographic traits, attitudes, and so forth—and the likelihood that one becomes involved in protest activities. Experimental designs are often implemented by social psychologists who study individual engagement in collective action and who are usually trained to use these kinds of methods. They can take various forms, from lab to survey experiments—sometimes embedded in larger surveys—and also field experiments.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that recent developments make increasing use of "Big Data," often retrieved from social media, to study protest participation. A recent example is Larson et al.'s (2019) large-scale empirical test on the role of social networks for protest participation based on "Big Data" on real-world protest attendance. This study provides support for social theories of protest that hold that participation depends on exposure to others' intentions, and network position determines exposure.

WHO PROTESTS?

The question of who takes part in protest activities is central in studies of protest participation (see Chapters 32 to 39 and also 40 to 44 in this volume). Just as not all of the citizenry participates politically—some may never vote, for example—not everybody engages in protest activities. In fact, a much smaller proportion of people protests, as compared to those who vote (see also Giugni and Grasso 2017, 2019b). A good deal of the literature on protest participation is explicitly devoted to depicting the profile of protesters by studying their social background and political attitudes. Amongst the early efforts in this perspective is Jenkins' (1967) analysis of participants in Easter marches in two countries, who found important differences both with national samples as well as amongst them, suggesting that protesters share a specific profile that distinguishes them from nonparticipants. More recently, however, McVeigh and Smith (1999) found that those who engage in social protest are similar in many respects to those who engage actively in institutionalized politics, although certain characteristics increase the likelihood that individuals will engage in protest relative to institutionalized politics.

But what distinguishes protesters from those who do not participate in protest activities or do so only sporadically? Scholarship on political participation has repeatedly shown that more resourceful individuals in general are more likely to participate politically. Thus, individuals with higher socioeconomic status and higher education are more likely to participate (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba et al. 1995, Grasso and Giugni 2021). This also applies to protest participation. As Van Aelst and Walgrave (2001), amongst others, have noted, even though the range of people taking part in protest activities has broadened over time—reflecting what they call a normalization of the protesters—the less well educated, the socially vulnerable, and the needy remain less likely to take to the streets.

Thus, against the idea of protesters being anti-state radicals who belong to socially marginal groups or who despise conventional forms of political participation, researchers have stressed the strong civic sense as well as the attachment to politics—albeit not necessarily to traditional or representative politics—of those who get involved in social movements and protests activities (Norris et al. 2005). These "critical citizens" or "dissatisfied democrats" (Dalton 2004; Norris 1999) are highly interested in politics, but show little system support and trust towards established political actors and institutions, are cynical about established politics, and at the same time confident that both individual and collective action can help change things. They are "engaged citizens" who often take part in protest activities, also owing to their low level of trust in traditional political institutions and high feelings of efficacy with respect to citizens' direct participation (Gamson 1968). Mistrusting citizens who engage in non-institutional forms of political engagement may have a more critical stance towards powerholders and institutional politics, rather than being politically alienated (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Dalton 2004; Inglehart 1997; Norris 1999). While mistrust has long been viewed as signaling disaffection with politics (Schumpeter 1942; Almond and Verba 1963), when coupled with a sense of political efficacy—that is, with agency power—this might lead to more critical citizens who engage beyond voting (Norris 1999). Along these lines, Hooghe and Marien (2013) suggest that political trust is positively associated with institutional participation, but negatively associated with non-institutional participation.

As Norris et al. (2005: 203) have put it, "[P]rotest participation cuts across conventional divisions of class, education, and gender and draws disparate groups to the streets, although there remains a bias towards the younger generation more than the middle aged." At the same time, "the social characteristics, systems support, motivational attitudes, and behavioral characteristics of demonstrators varied by the type of event" (Norris et al. 2005: 203). In this regard, Saunders et al. (2012), Andretta et al. (2015) and Giugni and Grasso (2019a) all distinguish between different types of protesters, suggesting that often protest actions—in this case, street demonstrations—gather a less than homogeneous crowd, while Verhulst and Walgrave (2009) focus more specifically on what is distinctive about first-time protest participants.

We should also note that the profile of protesters is not the same across all protest issues and movements but that it varies depending on the specific content of the claims made during a given protest action (Grasso and Giugni 2013, 2016). People engaging in left-wing movements and protests are likely to differ in many respects from people engaging in right-wing movements and protests, certainly concerning their value orientations and goals (see also Grasso and Giugni 2018). In particular, some have argued that the propensity to take to the streets and engage in protest politics is not the same on the left and on the right of the political spectrum. While leftists assign a greater importance to protesting in the streets, rightists tend to privilege more institutional channels (Kriesi 1999). This reflects a cultural difference, a "civil rights coalition" stressing direct action as well as bottom-up and participatory forms of democracy, and a "law and order coalition," prioritizing top-down intervention and representative democracy (della Porta 1996).

An important piece of work showing the specific profile of participants in a given kind of protest is Kriesi's (1989) analysis of the class base of the so-called new social movements. Based first on the Dutch case and then more generally, he suggested that, although new social movements are supported by broad sections of the population, their inner circles are predominantly constituted by certain segments of the new middle class, namely the young specialists in social and cultural services—the so-called "social and cultural specialists"—and some of the young administrative specialists in public service, as opposed to the so-called "technocrats" (managers and supervisors of all sorts). This is seen as reflecting the emergence of a new cleavage within the new middle class between a social–cultural component made of those who have a service relationship with their "clients" and a technocratic component made of those who have control over organizations. The former, who display left-libertarian values, are seen as trying to defend their relative autonomy against the latter (see also Grasso and Giugni 2018). Some, however, have analyzed and questioned, at least in part, such a specific social profile of participants in new social movements (Eggert and Giugni 2015; Peterson et al. 2015), hypothesizing a progressive "homogenization" of the social composition of old and new movements (Eggert and Giugni 2012).

More generally, this shows the importance of the issues, an aspect that has largely been neglected in the extant literature (see also Giugni and Grasso 2018). A great deal of effort has been made to show that individuals who engage in protest activities—especially the most committed ones—tend to overwhelmingly come from specific social strata, display a higher level of education, and are generally more resourceful than nonparticipants. However, much less attention has been paid to showing how this may apply to certain protest issues and movements—in particular, the "progressive," left-libertarian movements that arose from the shift from materialist to postmaterialist values (Inglehart 1977)—but not to others, including more "bread-and-butter" movements as well as right-wing movements. The use of the protest-survey method to an increasingly wide set of protests has allowed to at least start moving in this direction, aiming for a more issue-specific account of protest participation.

HOW CAN PROTEST PARTICIPATION BE EXPLAINED?

The question of who takes part in protest activities is related to that which is arguably the core question, namely how protest participation can be explained. This is since looking at the individual characteristics of those who protest—their social background, for example—tells us a lot about what are the explanatory factors making people more likely to participate in such activities. Let us clear all doubts right away: there is no single way to classify the various accounts of and approaches to the study of protest participation (see Chapters 2–13 in this volume). Here we would like to simply suggest that explanations of protest participation can be categorized into three mains kinds, depending on the key explanatory factors examined: microstructural, social–psychological, and dispositional—or, perhaps better put—predispositional accounts. Table 24.1 summarizes the key similarities and differences of the three approaches on a number of counts: the way in which protest is defined, their disciplinary benchmark, whether they stress "push" or "pull" factors—borrowing this metaphor from migration studies—the more specific key explanatory factors they stress, and the extent to which they look at context. The key criterion for distinguishing between the three approaches here is the kind of explanatory factors that each emphasizes.

Microstructural accounts focus on social embeddedness as well as the role of pre-existing networks and ties to explain involvement in protest activities, often called "micromobilization structures" or, more commonly, "mobilizing structures" by students of social movements (see also Giugni and Grasso 2019c). This kind of account stresses "pull" factors related to recruitment into politics. In other words, people who are previously embedded in all sorts of social networks—organizational as well as interpersonal—are more likely to take part in protest activities and in social movements. This approach is popular in sociology and has been

Table 24.1 Similarities and Differences between Three Types of Accounts of Protest Participation

	Microstructural accounts	Social-psychological accounts	Predispositional accounts
Definition	Inductive/empirical	Inductive/empirical	Deductive/typological
Disciplinary benchmark	Sociology	Social psychology	Political science
Push/pull factors	Pull (social networks)	Push (motivations)	Push (incentives)
Key explanatory factors	Social embeddedness, pre-existing networks and ties	Grievances, identity, emotions	Political attitudes, values, and norms
Context-sensitive	Yes	No	Sometimes

applied above all to the study of how people get recruited into social movements. Snow et al.'s (1980) article on differential recruitment represents a milestone in this regard, although their analysis does not focus on protest participation but deals more broadly with participation in social movements. Unlike previous explanations focusing on the social–psychological or motivational level of analysis, they found that differential recruitment is not merely a function of dispositional susceptibility, but is strongly influenced by structural proximity, availability, and affective interaction with movement members, and that a movement organization's network attributes function as an important determinant of its recruitment strategies and growth.

Although hardly limited to the microstructural side of activism, McAdam's (1988) award-winning book is another important milestone in this kind of account. He describes and analyzes the impact of the Freedom Summer campaign of June 1964, when over 1,000 volunteers went to Mississippi to register black voters and staff "freedom schools." In a related article (McAdam 1986), this author outlines a model of recruitment to high-risk activism that emphasizes the importance of both structural and individual motivational factors, although the stress is more generally on the importance of microstructural factors. And in another co-authored article using the same data (McAdam and Paulsen 1993), he suggests an elaborate model of recruitment in social movements that stresses in particular the need to specify the relationship between social ties and activism.

The number of examples of microstructural accounts of protest participation could be extended, but this is not the purpose of the present discussion. Let us just mention certain works showing the importance of pre-existing networks and ties that make use of protest survey data. For example, Diani (2003) examined participation in antiwar demonstrations using network analysis and suggested to expand our view of the mobilizing networks that facilitated people's involvement in the demonstrations by looking not only at associations but also at "protest communities," that is, sets of activists sharing a sustained participation in protest activities. In a similar fashion, Fisher et al. (2005) focus on the role of organizations for promoting participation at globalization protests to show that social movement organizations mobilize non-local participants and coordinate travel to protest events, hence playing an important role in expanding the protesting population beyond local citizens. Walgrave and Wouters (2014) offered a novel interpretation of the role of interpersonal networks for protest participation, reversing the question: instead of being asked to participate, they focus on participants asking others.

Social–psychological accounts focus on the role of grievances, identity, and emotions, and more generally look at the small-group dynamics that facilitate or hinder participation in protest activities. Unlike microstructural accounts, this kind of explanation stresses "push" factors, that is, the individual characteristics that lead people to get involved. In particular, they underscore the crucial role of motivations for getting involved in protest activities and more broadly social movements. As the label clearly indicates, this approach adopts a social–psychological perspective and, just like microstructural accounts, it is applied above all to the study of participation in social movements. Coming from disciplines other than political science, this kind of account often refers to proximate and broader notions such as participation in social movements or collective action, rather than only protest participation per se. However, works in this research tradition are also concerned more specifically with participation in protest activities.

Once again, we could refer to a long list of important works that follow this perspective. Gamson (1992) is an important stepping-stone for the social–psychological approach to protest participation in the social movement research field, even though this work deals more broadly with participation in social movements. Other relevant examples include works by Klandermans and collaborators as well as van Zomeren and collaborators, two groups of researchers whom we think have made important contributions to social–psychological approaches in this respect. Although effectively beyond a social–psychological approach, *strictu sensu*, Klandermans' (1997) book provides an overview of his social psychology of protest. Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2013) offer a more recent overview of the key aspects of social–psychological explanations of protest. They discuss the role of various factors stressed by this kind of account, such as grievances, efficacy, identification, emotions, and social embeddedness, and combine them into dual-pathway models. In a somewhat more focused perspective, van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2011) look at the motivational dynamics of protest participation, suggesting a model combining instrumental, identity, and group-based anger, and shows that these factors account for variance in motivation among actual participants (see also Chapter 10 in this volume).

Social–psychological accounts often stress the role of social identity for collective action. For example, van Zomeren et al. (2008) develop an integrative social identity model of collective action that incorporates three socio–psychological perspectives on collective action. These works, moreover, suggest that there is more than one single pathway to collective action. For example, van Zomeren et al. (2004) stress the role of group-based anger and group efficacy, showing the existence of two distinct pathways to collective action tendencies, hence providing support for a dual pathway model of collective action. Similarly, Stürmer and Simon (2004) build on an articulation of two influential social–psychological approaches and suggest a dual-pathway model of collective action—one based on the calculation of costs and benefits of participation and another based on collective identification processes as suggested by the social identity approach—which seem to operate independently. Others have focused on the role of personality or combined it with more standard social–psychological approaches. Duncan (2018), in the review of personality and social psychology research on motivations for collective action, integrates personality and social psychology theories of collective action into a more comprehensive model. These works suggest not only that there is more than one single path to protest participation, but also that there is more than one single social–psychological account of protest participation, see also Chapter 4 in this volume.

Predispositional accounts focus above all on political attitudes, values, and norms. These are all dispositions, often seen as preceding involvement, which may either favor or prevent participation in protest activities. Similarly to social–psychological accounts, this kind of explanation also stresses "push" factors leading to protest participation. However, such "push" factors are of a different kind, and are usually interpreted as externally driven incentives for participating rather than internally originating motivations. Clearly, predispositional accounts come from research traditions in political science: the political participation tradition as well as rational choice theory.

This body of literature is probably quantitatively smaller than the two other discussed so far, also because authors working in this perspective, unlike students of social movements and protest behavior, are often also interested in other modes of participation—most notably, voting—or in political participation more generally. Lipsky's (1968) fundamental article stressing protest as resource for more resource-poor groups paved the way to a whole strand of research stressing the political nature of protest behavior. Another early effort in this direction can be seen in Orum's (1974) comprehensive model of participation in protest movements stressing four main routes to participation.

Predispositional accounts often rely, either implicitly or more explicitly, on certain tenets of rational choice theory, most notably the idea that protest participation rests on potential participants being subject to different sorts of incentives for participation and calculating the expected costs and benefits of participation, including in relation to those incentives. Work done by Opp and collaborators, in our view, is particularly relevant in this respect. Opp (1989) provides a comprehensive account of such a rational choice approach to protest participation. Relatedly, Finkel et al. (1989) discuss a personal influence model and a collective rationality model with the aim of overcoming the free-rider problem posed by conventional rational choice theory.

In a somewhat different perspective, predispositional accounts put much emphasis on the role of ideology and value orientations for protest participation. For example, Welzel and Deutsch (2012) examined the impact of values on non-violent protest, showing their "ecological" effects in addition to their individual-level effects. They concluded that examining values in models of protest, not only as individual attributes but also as ecological properties, gives "culture" its full weight in explaining behavior. Similarly, Grasso and Giugni (2018) look at the relative impact of economic redistributive and social libertarian values, showing that there are different logics underpinning the effect of the two value sets on extra-institutional participation.

While the key explanatory factors emphasized is what most fundamentally distinguish the three types of accounts, they also differ, perhaps more implicitly, in other respects, most notably in the way in which protest participation is defined and in the extent to which context is taken into account. Concerning the first aspect, both microstructural and social-psychological accounts—prevalent in social movement studies—start from an inductive and empirical definition of protest participation, while predispositional accounts, more common in the political participation research tradition in political science, but also in rational choice accounts, usually adopt a deductive and typological definition. Concerning the second aspect, microstructural explanations are context-sensitive insofar as they look at social embeddedness and the role of social networks for involvement in protest activities, while social–psychological explanations, although they also look at group dynamics, tend to remain at the individual level, and finally, predispositional accounts are often also purely individual, sometimes examining how individual-level factors and dynamics interact with the broader context, for example when they look at how incentives coming from the broader environment may lead people to take part in protest activities.

Of course, this three-fold classification of existing works is a simplification of a more complex picture and has only a taxonomic purpose. Often research includes predictors from more than one single perspective and hardly any work focuses on a single aspect or explanatory factor, but most often combines various factors, even though some may be more at center stage than others. Moreover, some might contend that the factors stressed by social-psychological accounts can also be seen in some ways as predispositions, and therefore they form a research tradition that stresses "push" factors, as opposed to microstructural accounts which stress "pull" factors. Given the importance of social psychology in explanations of protest participation, however, we propose to distinguish them from works stressing the role of attitudes, values, and norms, which are more common in political science.

Finally, this account in terms of key explanatory factors should not lead us to forget that participation in protest activities is also—and perhaps above all—a process. Such dynamic understanding of protest participation has been stressed above all by students of social movements. For example, Klandermans and Oegema (1987; see further Klandermans 1997), consider mobilization as a step-wise process, suggesting that nonparticipation in a mass demonstration can be based on four main factors: lack of sympathy for the movement, not being the target of attempted mobilization, not being motivated, and the existence of barriers to participation. In a similar vein, Corrigall-Brown (2011) examines how individual characteristics and life experiences impact the pathway of participation in social movements more generally, but also in protest activities such as street demonstrations, rallies, or marches, by distinguishing between four distinct participation trajectories. Thus, in addition to static analyses focusing on the effects of a number of explanatory factors, it is also relevant to take a more processual and dynamic approach allowing to understand how people become involved in protest activities (Fillieule and Neveu 2019).

Protest Participation in Context

While research on protest participation has traditionally focused on the individual level of analysis, scholars have also looked at the role of the broader context as an important aspect to be considered for reaching a better understanding of protest participation. A context-sensitive analysis acknowledges that protest participation does not follow general laws, but rather that determinants and processes may vary from one context to another, especially when one compares very different settings such as democratic versus nondemocratic countries. It also points to the related fact that micro-level and macro-level factors often interact to explain individual involvement in protest activities.

Cross-national analyses of protest participation do not abound, but they are a few examples Giugni (2004). Barnes and Kaase's (1979) political action study represents an influential early attempt to carry out such a comparative analysis. Other, more recent efforts include, amongst others, Quaranta's (2015) broad cross-national comparative analysis of protest participation in Western Europe, where engagement in political protest is often rooted in the interplay of the protester's individual characteristics and their home country's contextual characteristics; and Vráblíková's (2014) study comparing old and new democracies, in which suggests a context-driven research agenda of the correlates of nonelectoral participation, including protest participation. Other efforts at contextualizing protest participation by comparing participants in street demonstrations, based on protest survey data rather than general population surveys, include Walgrave and Rucht's (2010) analysis of demonstrations against the war on Iraq and Giugni and Grasso's (2019) study of individual participants in street demonstrations in several Western European countries.

A number of studies have focused more directly on the macro–micro linkage, a long-standing interest of social scientists in general. The development of multilevel statistical techniques has made the study of such a linkage more practical on the empirical level. For example, to mention just a few, Dalton et al. (2010) examined how both individual-level and contextual factors fed into protest, showing that levels of economic and political development significantly influence the amount of popular protest and that the national context interacts with the micro-level predictors of protest activity Ketelaars (2015) argues that political circumstances affect the participants' expectations about the success of the demonstration, which in turn determine whether participants are instrumentally motivated;

Giugni and Grasso 2016 show that, while individual-level relative deprivation has a direct effect on the propensity to protest, this effect is greater under certain macroeconomic and political conditions stressing the conditioning role of political opportunities; and in a similar vein, Kurer et al. (2019) suggest that closer attention should be paid to the politicization of grievances to explain protest participation. Just as with Dalton et al. (2010), these works suggest that we must further pay attention to the role of the economic context, in addition to the political–institutional context.

The Transformation of Protest Participation

Political mobilization is not fixed. By the same token, protest participation has evolved over time, and also in the most recent period. Here we would like to point out a number of processes of change which we think have characterized protest participation and, more generally, protest politics, in recent years in particular. We refer to them, respectively, as expansion, "pluralization" (normalization), individualization, and digitalization. Perhaps with the exception of pluralization, these four processes in part refer to transformations of political participation more generally, but they have important implications for protest participation more specifically (see also Chapters 48 to 52 in this volume).

As Tilly (1986, 1995) has repeatedly shown, the means that citizens have at their disposal to make their claims have undergone large-scale historical change when the new action repertoire replaced the old action repertoire in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. This meant a transformation of the main forms of action, but also involved an expansion of the action repertoire to include forms that were previously unknown. Take for example, the strike. This form did not exist before the large-scale structural change in the forms of production brought about by capitalism, but now it is perhaps the most important, means of collective action for the labor movement and has also been "borrowed" by other movements, though in different forms, such as for example most recently the Climate Strike or Fridays for the Future movement. Similarly, mass demonstrations, public meetings, and petitions have become key forms in the new repertoire, while the old repertoire was formed by such forms as anti-tax riots, revolts against conscription, subsistence riots, and grain seizures.

Closer to our times, Theocharis and van Deth (2017, 2018) point to the continuous expansion of the repertoire of political participation—and therefore also of concepts and definitions of political participation—in particular starting from the mid-twentieth century. In a similar fashion, we can think of protest participation as also changing over time, with new forms emerging and old forms disappearing or becoming less relevant, but also new meanings assigned to certain forms. Thus, new forms emerged such as street theaters and mock interviews as well as creative and symbolic forms of protest. More recently, protest participation—and therefore political participation more generally—has expanded by also including digital forms, which we discuss further on as part of another process of transformation. This has helped other forms of participation to emerge, such as (politically motivated) flash mobs, online petitions, and all sorts of slacktivism.

A second process of transformation, which can also be seen as a sort of expansion but of a different kind, is what we refer to as "pluralization." By that we mean that, while certain people are still overrepresented among the core group of protesters, the range of people who, even if only once, demonstrate has broadened (Giugni and Grasso 2019). Van Aelst and Walgrave (2001) have referred to this as a normalization of the protesters, meaning that the characteristics of protesters would increasingly come to reflect those of the average citizen, which would take place alongside a normalization of protest, that is, the fact that protest has become both more legitimate and widespread. Such a "pluralization," furthermore, is not only seen in the range of people who participate in protest activities, but also in the wide variety of mobilization channels through which people get involved in demonstrations and in the range of different motives that they express for doing so (Giugni and Grasso 2019). Research on the normalization or "pluralization" of protest participation, however, is still sparse and more work is needed to get a better empirical anchoring for these hypothesized changes.

Scholars have pointed to a further kind of transformation: the increasing individualization that can be observed in certain forms of political participation. Once again, this process concerns political participation more generally, but also has implications for protest participation, depending on how one defines it. The most important of such activities are captured by terms such as "political consumerism" (Micheletti 2003; Stolle and Micheletti 2013), "food activism" (Lorenzini 2019), or more broadly "lifestyle politics" (de Moor 2017) (see Chapter 25 in this volume). These terms, but above all these emerging forms and modes or participation, some of which may also be considered as being part of a protest repertoire, all point to an increasing individualization of political participation and to a shift from "dutiful citizens," who have a conventional view of citizenship and engage mainly in electoral participation, to "engaged citizens," who put forward more individualized and direct forms of action (Dalton 2009) and to "self-actualized citizens" (Bennett 2008), who emphasize quality of personal life and social relations.

Some have linked such a transformation in the ways in which political citizenship is conceived and exercised with the rise of the digital age and its impact on citizenship for young people (Bennett 2008). This leads us to a further process of transformation we would like to stress, namely the increasing digitalization of political participation and, more specifically, of protest participation. As an increasing number of works show, online forms of participation become more and more frequent and widespread, especially amongst the younger generations (Bessant and Grasso 2018). Scholars have in particular documented such an increasing importance of online activism and digital politics in the context of social movement activism and protest participation (Bennett and Segerberg 2013; Earl and Kimport 2011; Gerbaudo 2012; Trottier and Fuchs 2015). Some have looked at the use of online social networks for mobilizing purposes (Anduiza et al. 2014; Theocharis et al. 2015), while others have focused on online protest participation and looked at the effects of the opportunities offered by the Net—but also its constraints—for protest participation (Earl and Kimport 2011; Elliot and Earl 2018; Larson et al. 2019).

Conclusion

Protest is an important feature of contemporary societies. It is said to have become increasingly normalized (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001), reflecting what some have called a "social movement society" (Meyer and Tarrow 1998) (see also Chapters 45 to 47 in this volume). In this chapter we have discussed individual participation in protest activities—protest participation—as a specific mode of extra-institutional political participation alongside more institutional modes—most notably, voting—as well as other specific modes such as political consumerism or digitally networked participation. We have addressed four key questions—What is protest participation? How can it be studied? Who engages in it? How can it be explained? —and examined other important aspects such as the role of the context and the transformation of protest participation.

To conclude our overview of research on protest participation, we would like to return to two main aspects we mentioned at the outset. First, as we tried to show, both the definition of protest participation and its actual expression are not fixed once and forever, but are subject to change over time. Scholarship must therefore adapt to these changes. Let us consider for example two of the main changes we have outlined: the growing individualization and digitalization or protest. Both changes require a shift of attention from the traditional forms of participation, although the latter are still prevailing in most cases. Second, explanations of protest participation stress different explanatory factors, determinants, and facilitating conditions. We suggested to distinguish between microstructural, social–psychological, and predispositional accounts. Yet, in spite of existing differences, large areas of convergence can be seen across the three approaches, and in the end it is more a matter of emphasis and focus than a radically different understanding of how protest participation is explained. Each discipline and sub-discipline follows a specific epistemology, which is reflected in the ways in which certain phenomena are explained, as well as in specific methodological approaches. While focusing on a set of specific aspects is perfectly legitimate if this fits theorizing, single-factor analyses should probably be avoided given their likely limited use, and combining different approaches and traditions should be seen as having more to offer for understanding why and how people engage in protest.

Finally, we should restate the importance of taking into account the role of the broader environment and, more specifically, the political–institutional context and also the economic context, and of combining individual-level and contextual explanatory factors to understand protest participation (see Grasso and Giugni 2016). We believe that this is a key avenue for future research in this field, as well as developing a stronger focus on understanding similarities and differences across protest issues and movements, another aspect that has largely been neglected thus far.

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CHAPTER 25

POLITICAL CONSUMERISM AND LIFESTYLE ACTIVISM

JASMINE LORENZINI AND FRANCESCA FORNO

DURING the last two decades, citizens increasingly used political consumerism and lifestyle activism to express their political values and to advance their political goals. Citizens buy goods and services aligned with their environmental, social, or ethical values (Micheletti 2003; Stolle and Micheletti 2013). In addition, some subscribe to community-supported agricultural projects (Dubuisson-Quellier and Lamine 2004; Forno and Graziano 2014; Hassanein 2008), engage in participatory supermarkets (Zitcer 2015, 2017), or belong to a solidary purchase group (Forno, Grasseni, and Signori 2015). Others adapt their overall lifestyle to live a life that corresponds to specific values, such as veganism (Cherry 2006), voluntary simplicity (Lorenzen 2012), or freeganism (Barnard 2011, 2016). Each of these forms of participation caries a specific understanding of citizens' democratic role and a conception of social change. Few studies question the outcomes of political consumerism in terms of conceptions of democracy and contributions to social change (Micheletti 2015). In spite of their growing appeal among citizens, political consumerism and lifestyle activism are seldom considered in terms of their contribution to democracy. We argue that it is not sufficient to examine whether citizens participate and how, researchers need to understand which specific conceptions of citizens' democratic role are carried by different forms of political participation. As citizens move away from institutional politics and increasingly engage in political consumerism and lifestyle activism, we believe it is important to question underlying conceptions of social change and democratic decision-making processes related to these alternative forms of participation because they shape citizens' action repertoires, and they contribute to political socialization. Hence, they shape future political participation and democratic decision-making processes.

First, we introduce research on political consumerism and lifestyle politics to show the different forms that it takes. We link these forms of political participation to protest waves to highlight that action repertoires change in relation to the broader political context. Political consumerism became an important form of action after the anti-globalization protest wave, at the end of the 1990s and during the early 2000s (Forno 2019; Forno and Wahlen 2022). Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) used boycotts to confront flagrant violations of human rights related to globalization and market liberalization. In addition, to negative campaigns advocating not to buy certain products to transform markets, SMOs started to support good practices through buycotts (Bossy 2014) and the creation of labels (Bartley et al. 2015). In recent years, environmental organizations often promote changes in lifestyle to reduce one's environmental footprint (de Moor, Catney, and Doherty 2019). Young citizens are more likely to engage in these flexible forms of participation (Bennett 1998) and women tend to engage more in political consumerism (Stolle and Micheletti 2013). In this section, we discuss how political consumerism contributed to moving not only political participation from the state and street to the market but also to the everyday.

Second, we move on to the question of social change. Here, we discuss how these forms of action make use of three logics at the same time: that of numbers, damage, and bearing witness. Then, we ask how different forms of political consumerism and lifestyle activism conceive of social change and what the processes associated with social change in these forms of political participation are. We distinguish among three types of strategies SMOs employ to diffuse individualized collective actions in order to build a more fair and sustainable society. This allows us to identify the kind of changes that might result from different forms of activism, and also changes that cannot happen in this framework. Importantly, inequalities are taken as a given and, therefore, they are not challenged. Furthermore, citizens appear as individuals bearing preferences and seeking transformations through the aggregation of their preferences (Fung and Wright 2001). However, there are limited opportunities to engage in a dialogue about the kind of society that is sought. This critique goes beyond political consumerism and lifestyle activism. It might be fair to formulate it more broadly against liberal representative democracy in a neoliberal context.

Third, we dig on the relationship between political consumerism, lifestyle activism, and conceptions of democracy. We question the underlying understandings of citizens' involvement in collective decision-making processes that prevail in political consumerism and lifestyle activism. When citizens boycott a brand and seek to influence how companies produce shoes, cars, or food, who decides that a given mode of production is better? Based on which criteria and political values? Whose interests are taken into account and defended or left out throughout the process? These questions relate to what we refer to as a procedural understanding of social change: to what extent social problems and their proposed solutions are collectively defined, and also on which conceptions of democracy these processes rely. In representative democracy, an aggregative understanding is coupled with checks and balances that guarantee the protection of minority groups' rights. Political consumerism and lifestyle activism are closer to direct democracy with a purely aggregative understanding of democratic procedures. Moreover, they are akin to prefigurative politics with a focus on small-scale changes in everyday life that do not promote inclusive society-wide projects.

In the conclusion, we propose that activists are moving towards new conceptions of social change that allow to bring larger segments of society in the debate and to build more encompassing understandings of social change thanks to *scaling through* logics. Moreover, we broaden the discussion and consider the impact of political consumerism and lifestyle activism on citizens' understandings of their role in democratic settings. We believe it is important to analyze these understandings since they feed back into citizens' future ability to participate politically.

INDIVIDUALIZED–COLLECTIVE ACTIONS' TRAJECTORIES

Citizens use multiple forms of political participation to have their voices heard. Research shows that youth conception of citizenship is less associated with voting and closer to engagement in community projects (Dalton 2009, Lister et al. 2003). Typically, older citizens favor voting and institutional forms of participation while younger citizens engage in SMOs and non-institutional forms of participation, including political consumerism and lifestyle activism. Political consumerism refers to the purchase of goods and services based, not only on price and product quality, but also on considerations about production methods (i.e., environmental sustainability, workers' rights, human rights). As Michelle Micheletti (2009) argues, political consumerism stresses individual responsibility for the common good by recognizing in the act of consuming a fundamental part of the production process, and thus providing an implicit (if not explicit) political meaning to consumer behavior, while lifestyle activism includes "activities that advance social change by fostering politically inspired lifestyle choices" (de Moor 2017: 181). This means that citizens, in their everyday life, make choices related to food (e.g., vegetarian diet, local food), modes of transport (e.g., cycling to work, using public transports), work (e.g., working less to earn less), and more generally choices that span different dimensions of one's everyday life (e.g., sustainable materialism, voluntary simplicity). Lifestyle activism is often associated with environmental concerns. Research shows that young people and women favor flexible forms of participation such as political consumerism (Stolle and Hooghe 2011) and, more generally, new generations seek political engagements that correspond to their lifestyles (Bennett 1998).

The Twist and Turn of Political Consumerism

Political consumerism is not new, both its negative form, known as "boycott," and its positive form, known as "buycotts," have been used frequently in the past. In Europe and America, between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, mobilizations fighting for the abolition of slavery used forms of political consumerism (Friedman 1999; Micheletti 2003). Throughout the nineteenth century and the twentieth century, political consumerism has been often used as a tool to oppose companies that treated their employees unfairly or as a form of opposition to certain governmental choices, as in the case of the famous boycott organized against French nuclear testing at Mururoa in 1995 (della Porta and Diani 2006). Traditionally more diffused in North America and Northern Europe, since the mid-nineties political consumerism has experienced a major growth in contexts where it had long been a niche phenomenon (Ferrer-Fons and Fraile 2013; Koos 2012). Throughout the Western world, the overall market demand for food, goods, or services from companies that adopt codes of conduct respecting workers' rights and the environment, has recorded a considerable growth, indicating that political consumerism has met cultural, political, and economic opportunities that favor its spread.

In this regard, research on political consumerism emphasized that its increase over the last twenty years among wider sectors of the population is related to the emergence of a new type of citizen combining strong support for democratic principles with growing distrust towards public institutions and traditional representative channels (such as, for example, political parties). This "new" citizen referred to as "critical citizen" (Norris 1999) is characterized by a specific socioeconomic profile. Critical citizens usually have high levels of education and income, and they show a particular willingness to bear the costs (both in terms of money and time) of experimenting with innovative ways of action and participation for the promotion of the "common good." In Norris' (1999: 16) words: "Evidence […] suggests that in most [Western] countries support for the community and for democratic principles remains overwhelming. […] But public support for the core institutions of representative government—including parties, parliaments and governments—has fallen in many established and new democracies."

In the late nineties, the rise of political consumerism was strongly influenced by the events that followed the so-called *Battle of Seattle* (the demonstration against the WTO in 1999 in the city of Seattle). The Global Justice Movement (GJM) identified the market as one of its privileged arenas for political activism (della Porta 2007; Micheletti 2003). During this period, political consumerism expanded to an increasingly large number of people and aimed to make local communities more solidaristic and sustainable. The spread of political consumerism was also made possible by the diffusion of new communication technologies. A number of successful boycotts organized during the 1990s were initiated via email and the internet. Through boycotts, transnational activists have publicized grievances and built new transnational awareness across borders to step up pressure on corporations. While globalization has stretched the distance between workers and consumers, boycotts have helped to build a broader sense of community by stimulating individuals to consider the conditions under which goods are produced in an increasingly global market (Collins 2009; Micheletti, Follesdal, and Stolle 2004). The use of the internet is particularly important since it has progressively allowed a faster dissemination of information while easing coordination among different actors and initiatives (Rosenkrands 2004). Furthermore, books, manuals, magazines, webpages, and apps, which presented critical assessments of the various products are increasingly available online and offline, thus facilitating consumers' access to information about different issues and campaigns.

After a phase of expansion, during the anti-globalization protest wave in which especially boycotts and buycotts launched by actors from the north–south fair trade organizations became widespread, political consumerism grew in several grassroots initiatives, mainly taking place at the local level (Parigi and Gong 2014). The end of the protest wave, which scholars date to have occurred between 2003 and 2005 (Della Porta and Mattoni 2014), was followed by a substantial repositioning of some SMOs from the global to the local scale of action (Forno and Graziano 2014). At the local level, political consumerism has continued to spread and expand, thanks to the rise of several new initiatives aiming at raising awareness regarding the need for more sustainable lifestyles and for new systems of material flows, capable of optimizing production processes so that materials and energy are used more efficiently (Schlosberg and Craven 2019).

Politicizing Everyday Life

Collective action research has usually focused on "visible" actions and major social changes (Melucci 1989). However, the number of studies which identify the inconspicuous "everyday life" as significant to understand contemporary citizens' political involvement has grown significantly. Research on different forms of so-called "lifestyle politics" or lifestyle activism emerging from societal and environmental concerns associated with overconsumption and overproduction (Wahlen and Laamanen, 2015; de Moor 2017, reflects the growing importance of the everyday as a "locus for change" in SMOs' action repertoires (Forno and Wahlen, 2022).

Alternative everyday practices are today among the principal modalities of action of a wide array of SMOs. Calls to citizens to take action in their everyday practices are made by an increasing range of grassroots organizations. Through "alternative values practices" (Centemeri 2018), activists aim to demonstrate that what they do can be important, not only to withdraw support from structures deemed unjust, but also to experiment with an alternative and desirable society (Goodman et al. 2012; Veron 2016; Yates 2011). Participating in alternative economic networks, adopting vegan lifestyles, or opting to conduct a slower or simpler life emphasize a deeper personal commitment, which synthetizes public and personal responsibility. It is precisely in this sense that everyday practices can play a role in not only envisioning alternative futures, but also enacting them, thereby demonstrating that alternatives are not far and distant, but can be considered in the here and now (Monticelli and della Porta 2018, Monticelli 2022).

This "prefigurative" political function of such everyday forms of engagement—that is, the practicing of particular utopian practices—has been proven to be particularly important to sustain collective action in periods of "latency," as everyday practices help to forge and maintain solidarity between activists, thus enhancing the possibility of achieving collective goals by providing opportunities to experience the desired ends (Yates 2015). As enacted social practices, alternative value practices can play "the often overlooked work of pursuing social change through an emphasis on cultivating cultural values for an alternative future" (Kennedy et al. 2018: 675). Additionally, being today in the light of an increasing variety of sustainability agendas, everyday practices appear to have the possibility to favor the encounter and collaboration of different types of actors: activist movements, ordinary people, local governments, and businesses, thus moving beyond the traditional notion of the public/private divide. After all, examples such as community renewable energy initiatives, eco-housing, community-supported agriculture, and community currencies such as time bank show how such initiatives are intertwined (with) private life (and vice versa). Within these experiences, in fact, the act of buying (or consuming) is not simply promoted individually, but socialized among a group of people, organized either formally or informally.

Social Change and the Ever-Expanding Market

Current modes of production, distribution, and consumption have innumerable shortcomings (Kloppenburg, Hendrickson, and Stevenson 1996, Marsden and Sonnino 2012): they damage the environment and reduce biodiversity; they create inequalities, precariousness, poverty, and unemployment; they impair the health and the well-being of workers and citizens; and they disrupt entire communities. In the light of these shortcomings and the growing distrust of political institutions already highlighted, many alternative forms of action have seen the light during the last decades (Bosi and Zamponi 2015, Giugni and Grasso 2018, Kousis and Paschou 2017, Schlosberg and Coles 2016). These alternatives pursue different changes and imagine specific kinds of strategies.

As already seen, the sustainable practice of consumption and lifestyles does not only shift the locus of conflict from the state and street to the market but also to the everyday. Differently from forms of political participation that envision social change in relation to party manifestos and legislative work, such types of activism carry specific understandings of social change related to citizens' everyday lives and how they enact their political attitudes on a daily basis. Such practices distinguish from earlier mobilization as they incorporate the three logics (Della Porta and Diani 2020) of protest of the modern action repertoire (the logic of numbers, the logic of damage, and the logic of bearing witness) as well as offering a distinctive conception of social change.

The Modus Operandi of Individualized Collective Actions

By practicing certain values and actions, individualized-collective actions aim to socialize wrongdoers by changing (or substituting) business activities through the "power of numbers" (DeNardo 2014). For example, through boycotts, grassroots organization have been able to publicize grievances to pressure corporations. In response to boycotts, some major corporations have made efforts to improve working conditions or their environmental standards, either because they feared that transnational campaigns might blemish their image and hurt their sales, or because they recognized the validity of activists' concerns (Spar and La Mure 2003). Moreover, boycott, buycott, and lifestyle activism can empower participants by spreading a sense of belonging to a community (Stolle and Micheletti 2013).

In addition to the logic of numbers, lifestyle politics and political consumerism also add to the logic of material or commercial damage. By using their purchasing power, for example, citizens seek to inflict as much damage as possible on their opponents in a way that is reminiscent of the strike. As when workers block production through strike action to damage the employer and force negotiation, by choosing what to buy or what not to buy, citizens in their role as consumers can damage or encourage producers to change their production policies. Through the strategy of naming and shaming, social movement actors have put the spotlight on the abuse by several multinational companies that were considered "enemies" (Boström 2019).

Finally, everyday politics and political consumerism also incorporate the logic of bearing witness. As della Porta and Diani (2020) argue, such initiatives stress "the central role of individuals in taking responsibility for the common good in their everyday life." Thus, politicizing everyday actions. Moreover, by practicing certain values, activists aim to demonstrate that everyday activities can be important, not only as an instrument of political protest but also to prefigure and experiment with an alternative and desirable ecological, sustainable society (Goodman, DuPuis, and Goodman 2012, Véron 2016, Yates 2015).

Underlying Conceptions of Social Change of Individualized Collective Actions

As Alberto Melucci (1989) has emphasized, everyday life in contemporary society is never far removed from collective action and social change, and the unofficial sphere of everyday life is where processes of social change might begin. But what kind of social change does individualized collective action aim to bring about and through what means? We distinguish three different kinds of transformations activists envision: lifestyle changes, fair trade, and sustainable communities. These three envisioned changes are associated with distinct forms of individualized–collective actions (ranging from more individualistic to more collectivistic forms) and different strategies of diffusion (scale deep, scale out, and scale up). Figure 25.1 graphically presents the kind of transformation that is sought (light gray circle), the distinct forms of action (inner circle), and the specific strategies of diffusion (outer circle).

Transformations associated with lifestyle change seek primarily to "scale deep" into people's personal life and habits. These changes are mostly set at the individual level and aim to transform people's cultural practices and values to promote change on how individuals consume and use goods and services on an everyday basis in their private life, their household, or their community. These correspond to practices such as freeganism and barter (Barnard 2016; Gross 2009), voluntary simplicity (Etzioni 2004; Lorenzen 2012), veganism and vegetarianism (Cherry 2015), all forms of actions that span individuals or communities who change their overall consumption. The second kind of transformation, fair trade, seeks to "scale up" to pressure changes in modes of production, aiming at changing how specific firms or sectors produce goods and services. Although this change is also set at the individual

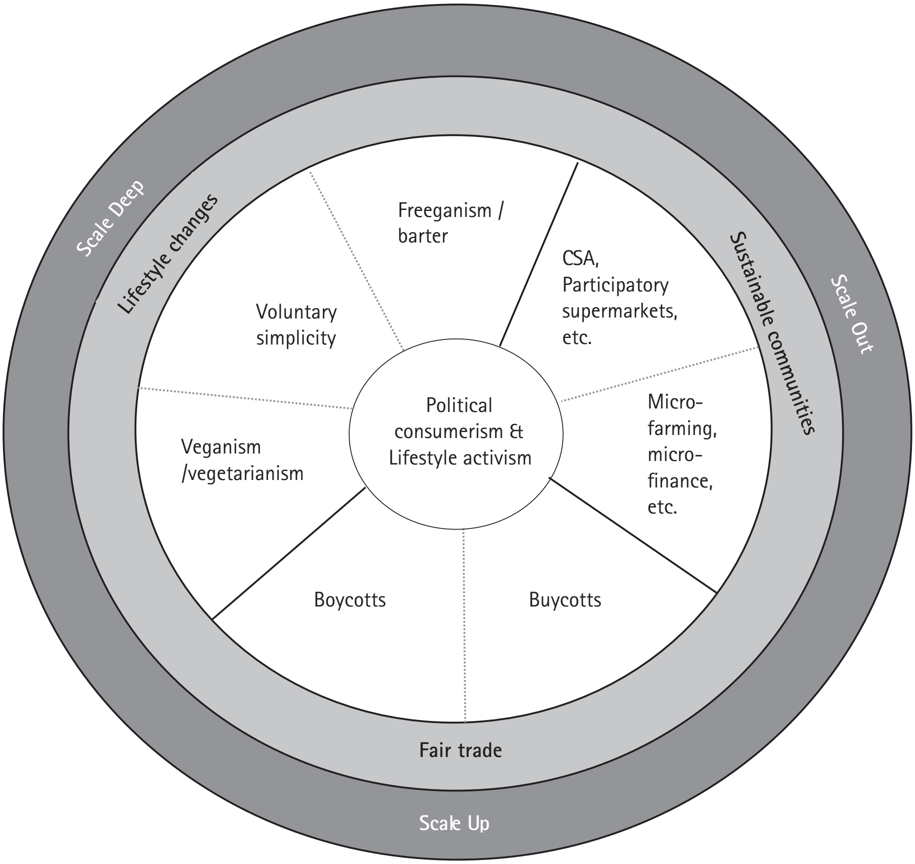
Scale Deep
Lifestyle changes
Freeganism / barter
CSA, Participatory supermarkets, etc.
Sustainable communities
Scale Out
Voluntary simplicity
Political consumerism & Lifestyle activism
Micro-farming, micro-finance, etc.
Veganism /vegetarianism
Boycotts
Buycotts
Fair trade
Scale Up

FIGURE 25.1 Strategies, Social Changes, and Forms of Action Associated with Political Consumerism and Lifestyle Activism

level, such individualist activism is more oriented to stimulate more efficient practices, and links often to law and policy regulations that promote shopping for a difference. This is the case, for example, of boycotts and buycotts based on environmental and social labeling schemes. Lastly, the third kind of transformation, sustainable communities, is place-based multisector coalitions that aim to build alternative, productive, and sustainable networks of production, exchange, and consumption (Forno and Graziano 2014) based on the idea of "sufficiency," therefore contrasting not only capitalism expansion of markets but also capitalist accumulation of profit, which is often related to economies of scale (up) to which they oppose the strategy of "scale out" horizontally through replication. This is, for example, the case of solidarity economy networks, community-supported agriculture, micro-farming, and microfinance.

The principal focus on self-determination and self-changing strategies based on personal changes which characterize political consumerism and lifestyle activism have been often criticized. In this regard it has been claimed that these kinds of social change and their associated strategies carry at least three potential risks: they might lead to elitism, result in niche economy, or be captured on the markets by larger economic forces. Several critiques have highlighted how such forms of action risk diverting civic action from real economic and social problems (the so-called "crowding out" thesis), promoting political–ideological formulas that channel social discontent away from what should be considered the real targets, such as national and international institutions. Based on the example of alternative food networks, Goodman et al. (2012) have, for example, stressed the limits of individualized–collective actions in terms of their transformative potential and efficacy, highlighting how proponents of such practices have shown in some cases to be scarcely politicized and more interested in preserving their own health and identity as well as social status. Moreover, it has also been argued that political consumerism and lifestyle activism encounter the risk of remaining a niche phenomenon at the edge of the market, with limited or no impact on how society functions, because they can be easily co-opted by corporate marketing strategies (Dubuisson-Quellier 2019). Indeed, several reflections on everyday activism have underlined the speed at which capitalism is able to absorb critiques and demands, transforming them into further commodity to be sold on the market for profit.

More generally speaking, action forms associated with both political consumerism and lifestyle politics, by focusing on transformations that take place within society or markets, while ignoring processes associated with decision-making in representative democracies, may fail to "be the change they want to see in the world." It is therefore important to question the democratic ideals of these conceptions of social change—the underpinning understanding of how citizens collectively decide about the society that they want to live in.

Contrasting Conceptions of Democracy and Collective Decision-Making Processes

Each form of political participation builds on specific democratic ideals. The term "democracy" has roots in ancient Greece and refers to the rule of/by the people. This simple definition hides contrasting understandings of citizens' role in a democracy—what it means for the people to rule. David Held (1987: 275) writes: "Politics is about power; that is it is about the capacity of social agents, agencies, and institutions to maintain or transform their environment, social or physical." In this understanding, politics is about citizens' capacity to change society. In complex societies, this capacity is essentially linked to collective decision-making processes that allow the representation of different points of view. Voting is the quintessential form of participation in liberal representative democracies (Przeworski 1999), while participatory democracy seeks to promote citizens' participation across multiple life spheres (Pateman 1970). Recently, much theoretical and political attention is placed on deliberative democracy and citizens' participation in various political assemblies (Bächtiger et al. 2018). When it comes to political consumerism and lifestyle activism, we argue that these forms of political participation lack a procedural understanding of social change. They do not define how society collectively deals with social problems and seeks to propose collective solutions taking into account the point of view of all concerned social groups.

Figure 25.2 presents different conceptions of democracy focusing on procedural understandings of social change. Based on this categorization, in what follows we propose that direct democracy and prefigurative politics are the underpinning conceptions of democracy that prevail in political consumerism and lifestyle activism. In a narrow understanding that corresponds to current democratic practices, direct democracy refers to procedures that allow citizens to express their views directly on a single political issue, most importantly referendums and initiatives (Lupia and Matsusaka 2004). However, direct democracy also relates to the Marxist ideal of the end of politics and direct rule of and by the

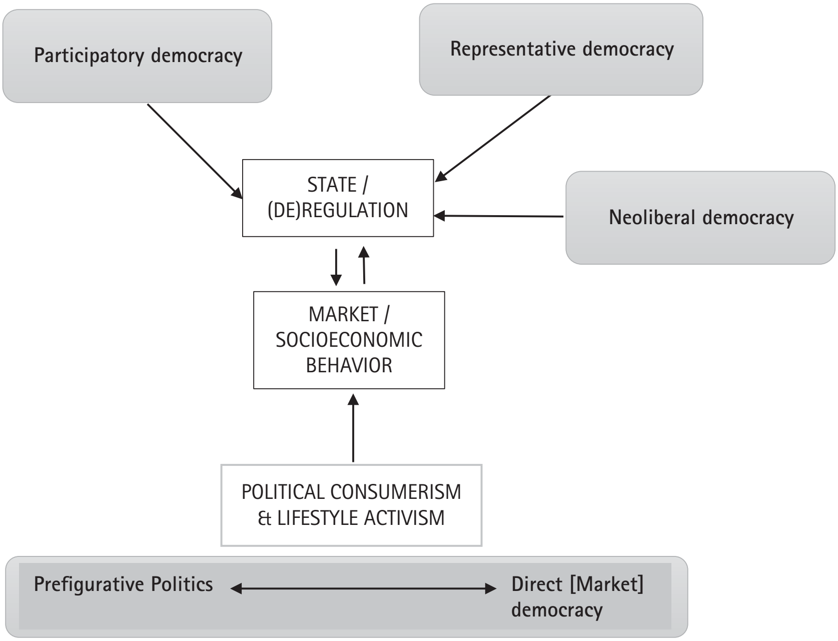

FIGURE 25.2 Conceptions of Democracy and Procedural Understandings of Social Change

people (Held 1987). In this understanding, the state serves the interests of wealthy segments of society, private enterprises, and more generally capitalism. Hence, the ultimate goal is to radically transform the very institutions of the state. David Graeber (2002: 9) writes, "It is about creating new forms of organization. […] It is about creating and enacting horizontal networks instead of top-down structures like states, parties or corporations." In these regards, the more radical goals of direct democracy meet those of prefigurative politics. Both advocate for the dynamic renewal of democracy through the practice of alternatives here and now. The goal is "to choose means that embody or 'prefigure' the kind of society they want to bring about. […] to create the new society 'in the shell of the old' by developing counterhegemonic institutions and modes of interaction that embody the desired transformation. […] directly implementing the changes one seeks, rather than asking others to make the changes on one's behalf" (Leach 2013: 1). A central feature is that citizens believe in their ability to transform their social, economic, and political environment through the adoption of distinct practices where the state plays a limited or no role.

Ideally, prefigurative politics is a sort of self-governance or direct democracy. Yet, there is a gap between the end of politics envisioned as the rule by the people and the practice of referendum and initiatives where people only get to vote on the outcome of a long policy process from which they are largely excluded. The main challenge is that radical forms of direct democracy or prefigurative politics are difficult to imagine on a large scale (within a society or a nation-state). They require the participation of heterogeneous social groups that are more or less willing to engage in such processes, but also who hold diverging interests and experience different realities in their everyday lives.

To substantiate these arguments, before discussing more thoroughly how political consumerism and lifestyle activism deal with social problems and seek to propose solutions, we first discuss procedural understandings of social change in representative, participatory, and direct democracy. In addition, we examine how neoliberalism challenges core understandings of citizens' relation to the state not only in terms of what is expected of citizens but also with regard to citizens' expectations toward the state.

Representative, Participatory, and Direct Democracy

The minimalist conception of democracy advocates for *representative democracy* based on the selection of rulers through competitive elections (Schumpeter 2010 [1942]). In this model, the right to vote allows every citizen to choose representatives who rule through the application of existing laws and regulations and also by writing new ones. The right to vote offers citizens the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes and, in turn, bounds citizens to the state. Thanks to the right to vote, citizens comply with the outcome of voting, that is, they accept the authority of elected representatives and resulting legislation (Przeworski 1999). Whereas, in participatory models, "maximum input (participation) is required and […] output includes not just policies (decisions) but also the development of the social and political capacities of each individual, so that there is a 'feedback' from output to input" (Pateman 1970: 43), a key premise of *participatory democracy* is that citizens cannot be considered in isolation from the institutions in which they participate (Pateman 2003). This means that political socialization across life spheres supports participation in the polity.

Citizens practice democracy in the public sphere *and* in the private realm of firms or in other settings such as schools. Participation is a self-enhancing practice, the more citizens participate, the more resources they have to participate: they learn how to participate and they feel efficacious (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). In contemporary societies, citizens have a limited democratic imagination—they envision few means and opportunities to participate in politics and contribute to social change (Perrin 2009)—and, in their everyday life, people tend to avoid politics (Eliasoph 1998). These features of contemporary societies hinder political participation.

The Neoliberal Silent Revolution

During the last forty years, neoliberalism has transformed prevailing understandings of the state's role. It first appeared as a reaction against Keynesianism and promoted specific economic policies that enhanced free markets. Yet, today, neoliberalism is "a governing rationality extending economic values, practices, and metrics to every dimension of life" (Brown 2015: 30). In this understanding of neoliberalism, all domains of life are organized as markets, humans are considered *only* as market actors, and competition replaces exchanges. Market-based mechanisms shape every aspect of society, and the role of the state is to promote markets across life-spheres, defending ideals of rationality, productivity, and profitability. Contrary to a widespread idea, the state is not passive as in the laissez-faire doctrine. In a neoliberal model, the state plays an active role in promoting and facilitating the creation of new markets (Purcell 2008). State (de-)regulation creates new opportunities for sales and profits, opening public services to private competition. In addition, state investments in urban design or higher education allow to attract competitive firms in a widespread competition that spans across territorial levels. Neoliberalism transformed the role of the state, but also its very conception.

This transformation has implications for the conceptions of human beings and citizens. Human beings are understood predominantly as *homo oeconomicus* defined as individuals who invest in their human capital to compete for jobs, incomes, and decent living conditions (Brown 2015). Wendy Brown highlights three implications for democracy, the loss of the ideal of equality, the disappearance of the social basis for organized interests, and the loss of foundations and concern for the *res publica* (the public thing, the common good). Regarding equality, when human beings are human capital, there are winners and losers, and this precludes equality. In a neoliberal model, society is a field of competition of all against all. As a society, it does not seek equality (equal treatment or equal protection). Second, the competition of all against all means there are no social divisions (e.g., social classes). Every individual can succeed in life irrespective of his/her social background, but without class consciousness it is very difficult to construct political conflict and to propose transformative ideals (Zizek 2008). Third, Brown argues that when you see everything through a market lens, you cannot think about problems in political terms. In addition, the state is both a firm and a manager that sets economic goals and pursues them. This relates to the idea of post-political societies where no major social transformations are deemed possible and where the state acts mainly as a manager (Swyngedouw 2011). The neoliberal transformation expels citizens from decision-making processes.

Procedural Understanding of Social Change in Political Consumerism and Lifestyle Activism

Building on these conceptions of democracy, it is now possible to situate political consumerism and lifestyle activism in terms of their prevailing procedural understanding of social change. The top of Figure 25.2 proposes that, in representative and participatory democracy, citizens' claims run through the state which addresses their demands and adopts regulations that produce behavioral changes in society. In representative democracy, citizens elect their representatives who are in charge of making the law, thus creating regulation. In this case, aggregation of preferences and bargaining between different political actors take place and, in a last step, the state will command and control, thus forcing all social actors to comply with the law. This corresponds to the *politician theory* of social change (Lofland 1993). This understanding of social change is characterized by pragmatism and feasibility, thus often resulting in scaled-down demands that are able to gain a majority in the parliament. Moreover, Fung and Wright (2001) explain that *command and control* corresponds to a top-down or state-led understanding of social change, whereas in *strategic bargaining and negotiation*, actors with unequal power seek to influence the outcome of a collective decision-making process that is more or less open to different social groups and interest. In participatory democracy, citizens take a more active role in the design of specific decisions. Ideally, citizens are engaged at various levels and in different forms of decision-making processes. It is commonly held that the participation of ordinary citizens allows taking into account the complex and multiple realities of citizens' daily lives. But most importantly these fora offer opportunities for citizens to acquire political resources such as information, feeling of political efficacy, and participation experience. These resources reinforce the bargaining power of citizens and allow them to identify modes of action that force the state to consider their points of view on the issue. Apart from this difference, in the case of participatory democracy, the state plays a central role in adopting rules and enforcing them on the market and society. In addition, the neoliberal ideal of democracy also envisions an active role for the state which should open new markets and contribute to the expansion of marketization processes to different life spheres.

Quite on the contrary, political consumerism and lifestyle activism appear at the bottom of Figure 25.2, in this case, changes take place directly on the market or in society. For instance, the two main forms of political consumerism, boycott and buycott, build on the power to vote through purchase choices. Citizens defend specific modes of production and distribution through the choices they make on the market. Similarly, CSA or microfinance offer opportunities to support specific modes of production. Sometimes these forms of participation include elements of participatory democracy since participants interact with one another to collectively take decisions about the kind of goods they want to purchase and the producers they seek to support. In the case of choices pertaining to sustainable lifestyles, citizens enact the changes they want to see happening in society on a broader scale. They adapt their lifestyle to live in accordance with the political values they defend: here, social change is linked to the aggregation of individual practices and values. As mentioned earlier, these actions build on the logic of numbers, damage, and bearing witness, to obtain changes in the market or in citizens' everyday life. The prevailing logics are aggregation and strategic bargaining—gaining widespread support to force change. This allows promoting social, environmental, and ethical values directly on the market. It appears as a radical application of the neoliberal ideal of extending economic values to politics.

Envisioned social changes are thought to happen on the market and by affecting socioeconomic behaviors. Hence, social change runs directly from the market to socioeconomic behaviors. The state is absent. The idea is that as markets open new lines of business or ban certain practices, individual changes in behavior will follow. This conception of social change differs from representative and participatory conceptions, since the state and public regulations play no significant role in forging socioeconomic behaviors. In this sense, it corresponds to ideals of direct democracy or prefigurative politics. However, the challenge, in neoliberal societies, is that social change might be reduced to the smallest common denominator, namely financial interaction. Prefiguration is only possible within the realm of established social groups, communities, or institutions that offer opportunities for repeated interactions and political learning (Fitzmaurice and Schor 2019). It is not well suited for rapid, flexible, and one-time interactions. Devoid of these features, prefiguration is an empty concept—what is the means–end transformation of interactions that are reduced to narrowly defined commercial transactions? They are reduced to voting with one's money and, in spite of its transformative ideals, prefiguration could inadvertently promote the interests of a neoliberal quest for ever-expanding markets.

Another important limit of this procedural understanding of social change relates to the possibility of including and engaging with large segments of the population. As we have seen, political consumerism and lifestyle activism pursue sustainability, thus seeking to improve working conditions or to reduce the environmental impact of production and consumption. However, it is not clear how they can address issues of political inequalities and promote citizens' participation in decision-making processes that affect their everyday life. Quite on the contrary, the lack of procedural understandings of social change reduces most citizens to passive consumers of ready-made solutions. Those who lack the time, energy, or other resources to engage in full-fledged prefiguration are left to vote with their dollars, supporting solutions that fit best their interests and preferences. In this sense, the democratic project behind political consumerism and lifestyle activism is elitist.

Conclusion. Democratic Ideals of Political Consumerism and Lifestyle Activism

In this chapter, we identified three kinds of social change and three strategies used to enhance the potential of these transformations. We argued that when political consumerism and lifestyle activism take the form of boycotts and buycotts, they build on fair trade and seek to scale up social change. This means that political consumerism and lifestyle activism work primarily on markets seeking to gain larger shares of the market. In turn, when they take the form of voluntary simplicity, vegetarianism, or freeganism, changes occur through lifestyles, thus seeking to scale deep, transforming society in depth from the grassroots up. Lastly, when related to the establishment of sustainable communities, the strategy is to reach larger segments of society and to scale out, thus transferring this socioeconomic and political model to other organizations and enterprises.

We have highlighted that these kinds of social change and strategies carry risks: they might lead to elitism, result in niche economy, or be captured on the markets by larger economic forces. In addition, we have argued that these forms of action lack a procedural understanding of social change—a collective form of decision-making that allows large segments of society to express their preferences democratically. Democratic models offer specific understandings of this procedural dimension of social change. While representative and participatory democracy view social change as associated with the state's power to command and control, to aggregate preferences, and engage in negotiations, in neoliberal democracies many social changes are enacted directly on the market through individual choices. We situate political consumerism and lifestyle activism as closest to a direct or prefigurative democratic ideal. Similar, to neoliberal democracy, they seek social change directly on the market and in society. This means that there is no role for the state in this understanding, and collective decision-making processes are either limited to small groups or absent.

In spite of these limits, political consumerism and lifestyle activism remain the most innovative and engaging forms of political action in the twenty-first century. Importantly, activists engaged in these forms of action are aware of and seek to overcome these limits. A new strategy that seeks to overcome the lack of a procedural understanding of social change already appeared. *Scaling through* is used to counter this democratic deficit, it seeks to involve large segments of society in citizens' assemblies. These deliberative and participatory fora (such as participatory budgeting, food policy councils, etc.) bring together alternative organizations that seek to transform society from the bottom-up, state actors, and citizens. These are promising avenues for democratic renewal, and they contribute to the continued transformative potential of political consumerism and lifestyle activism (Laamanen, Forno, and Wahlen 2022).

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CHAPTER 26

ONLINE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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In the 1990s and early 2000s, as internet usage became increasingly embedded in the daily lives of people globally, scholarship on its usage spread across a range of disciplines including communication, sociology, and political science. Early research shared several common orientations and questions. First, many researchers treated what happened online as new and different from interactions offline. A considerable amount of early work, therefore, was descriptive, focusing on which people could access the internet (i.e., research on the digital divide) or what users did once online (DiMaggio et al. 2001). Second, in assuming fundamental differences between online and offline interactions, early work tended toward utopian (e.g., Rheingold 1993) or dystopian (e.g., Clarke 1994) views of the opportunities or dangers of internet usage. Third, whether caused by, or simply allowed by, an assumption of difference between online and offline life, many people interested in studying media and/or digital media began studying online phenomena without necessarily deeply engaging with existing research on offline analogs (e.g., as Earl 2018, 2014 shows, early research on online protest did not engage much with decades of scholarship on offline protest).

Fortunately, the last several years have seen a ripening of this research area, with many interrogating these early tendencies, arguing for a hybridized media system (Chadwick 2013) in which traditional and new media experience constant crossover in both directions (Chadwick 2011), and for a fundamental blurring of online and offline distinctions in political participation (Maher and Earl 2019). Empirical shifts have also moved many scholars past utopian and dystopian views and into more productive conversations about the conditions under which potential gains or potential losses are likely (Earl and Kimport 2011, e.g., Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl 2012; Karpf 2012), despite an occasional trade book that is more hyperbolic (e.g., Morozov 2011).

Unfortunately, research on digital and social media and political participation continues to be balkanized. Scholarship on new media dynamics is still often published in specialty journals and journals with larger audience shares of new media scholars. While not true for communication or political communication scholars, many others analyzing contemporary political participation continue to ignore online aspects. In this chapter, we argue that it is the best practice now to consider digital and hybridized dimensions of contemporary political participation, even in contemporary studies of ostensibly offline activities.

Hybrid Media Systems

One major reason for the importance of considering new media in contemporary political participation research is that the most advanced work on media and political participation understands media as a hybridized system (Chadwick 2013, 2011). In a hybrid media system, traditional and new media co-constitute the media environment, which is pushed further still by the integration of digital and social media into everyday life such that communication takes place and relationships are built and maintained through both online and offline contacts. For instance, one cannot separate campaigns into online and offline components neatly as citizens learn about candidates and protests in-person and online, discuss events with conversation partners who may have learned about them on different modalities, and participate in events in-person and online through "dual screening," or the "the complex bundle of practices that involve integrating, and switching across and between, live broadcast media and social media" (Vaccari, Chadwick, and O'Loughlin 2015: 1041).

Media formats (e.g., television, newspaper, radio, social media, etc.) have overlapping affordances as well as unique attributes. Consequently, users may find benefit from using some format in only some instances and/or may find that formats work best when in concert with each other. For instance, Anstead and O'Loughlin (2011) explain that viewers can engage with events on television while also adding new information to the event through social media, as viewers of *BBC Question Time* did over Twitter in their study. In a study of hybrid Twitter interactivity during the 2012 debates, Freelon and Karpf (2015) found that media hybridity was illustrated in the political humor that emerged from the media events and increased the roles of non-political elites and non-elites.

In addition to many different media interacting, media culture shapes people's understanding of what politics is. Chadwick (2013: 207) explains that the "hybrid media system is based upon conflict and competition between older and newer media logics but it also features interdependence among these logics." The media ecology is shaped by media logics, the distinctive features of each medium and their formats that organize communication (Altheide 2013). How these media logics are employed may change the social and political contexts in which they reside. For example, before "fake news" became part of the American political vernacular, Altheide (2013: 228) observed that political opposition could use social media to "actually plant false information via Twitter or Facebook in order to disrupt protests or ensnare political organizers." While context can enhance or diminish the extent to which media logics are used, there remains the idea that given types of media have certain capacities and constraints to be used within a range of ways. Powerful political actors understand how to manipulate the flow of information to shape people's understanding of their environment and expectations about political actors, the system, and the possibilities for media, as well as citizens' understanding of their participatory potential, which may also impact political participation.

USEFUL AND LESS USEFUL DISTINCTIONS

With so much thought about hybridity in media systems, it is worth considering when other distinctions may or may not be useful. We argue that making distinctions between different forms of political participation—such as campaigns and voting, social movements and protest, and civic engagement—is worthwhile, particularly because it allows scholars to study each with the benefit of specialized literatures developed over a half century or more. As one may imagine from the hybrid media environment research just discussed, however, we do not think that continuing to entirely segregate research on the same kind of political participation (e.g., protest) as "offline" or "online" is as useful in many situations.

Distinctions between Forms of Participation Are Useful

It has been popular to study the effects of new media usage on political participation broadly, mixing indicators for political participation that include activities like voting, protesting, online petitioning, volunteering, etc. (e.g., Kahne and Bowyer 2018). For instance, Chan, Chen, and Lee (2017) combine 12 different kinds of political participation that range from voting to protesting to sharing political information in their study of online and offline political participation in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China. This has also been true of major meta-analyses. Oser and Boulianne (2020) conduct a meta-analysis of panel data on new media and political participation usage combining electoral, protest, and civic participation across 38 separate studies. In a separate meta-analysis, coefficients were averaged across different participation forms even when separate coefficients were available (Boulianne 2020).

Findings from these broad studies of political participation seek to understand if there is a general relationship between new media and political participation. Meta-studies tend to find a positive effect of internet use (Boulianne 2009) and/or social media use (Boulianne 2015) on political participation, across a wide variety of countries and media environments (Boulianne 2019) and for young people (Boulianne and Theocharis 2020). Research also suggests that these positive effects have strengthened over time (Boulianne 2020, 2019).

Two problems have been acknowledged in this literature. First, it is difficult to compare findings from different studies because of different underlying models, including whether similar key variables like political interest and new media usage were incorporated (Boulianne 2009). After all, there is research that shows that political or civic interest and/or awareness may moderate the relationship between new media usage and political participation (Boulianne 2016) and may do so differently for different forms of political participation (Bimber et al. 2015).

Second, reasonable questions can be raised about the causal direction of cross-sectional findings tying new media usage to political participation. Norris (2000) argued for three broad possibilities: (1) media use begetting participation (mobilization in her terms), (2) political participation begetting media use (reinforcement in her terms), or (3) both media use and participation begetting more of each other (a virtuous cycle in her terms). In their meta-analysis of panel time series research, Oser and Boulianne (2020) argue that reinforcement effects, which occur when participation begets media use, dominate, and that these effects get stronger over time.

In addition to these two widely acknowledged issues, there are also theoretical reasons to doubt that there is a unified effect of new media usage on major forms of political participation, just as one would be unlikely to find that any other influence has a unified effect on voting and campaigns, protest and social movements, and civic engagement, among other forms of political participation. For instance, where Oser and Boulianne (2020) find more reinforcement effects, this may represent more the mix of political activities being studied and may not be accurate for specific forms. Even Boulianne (2009) acknowledges that "the relationship between Internet use and engagement may differ for civic and political forms of engagement (or different political activities)" (196), but is unable to disaggregate effects. Gibson and Cantijoch (2013) examine this issue directly, finding that both online participation and offline participation constructs are multidimensional, which leads them to argue that "researchers need to abandon the 'one size fits all' approach that has featured in much of the literature to date and impose greater selectivity and consistency in their attempts to measure" political participation (714). Given this concern, we go on to separately review research on voting and campaigns, protest and social movement participation, and other forms of political participation.

Distinctions between Online and Offline Are Helpful Only Under Some Conditions

It has been common to measure online and offline political participation separately. For instance, Gil de Zúñiga, Barnidge, and Scherman (2017) studied offline political participation, including "getting involved in political groups or campaigns, participating with social movement groups, donating money to a campaign or cause, attending a protest, or attending a political rally" (49) and online political participation, including "signing or sharing an online petition, participating in an online question-and-answer session with a politician or public official, creating an online petition, and signing up online to volunteer to help with a political cause, using a mobile phone to donate money to a campaign or political cause via text message or app, and starting a political or cause-related group on a social media site" (49). Some scholars have gone even further, arguing that online participation is a weak imitation of offline politics (Tarrow 1998) and a form of participation that could not crossover to facilitate offline participation (Diani 2000).

We see two potential problems with this as a generalized approach. First, we argue that it is hard to study any form of contemporary political participation today without considering online dynamics, making studies of contemporary offline participation dubious without consideration of online elements. Second, we contend that there should be a clear reason for delineating offline and online elements from one another—there should be theoretical or empirical gains that depend on this separation, not just the tradition of segregating the activities. One reason we make these arguments is digital technology usage often innervates pathways to engagement, whether that engagement ultimately takes place online or offline. For instance, it would be hard to cleave out the digital elements of national political campaigns today and defend something like a separate "offline campaign" and "online campaign" existing. They are intertwined, and people who attend offline events may come to the candidate or event through digital or social media. Vitak et al. (2011) observe that one can donate to a campaign by mailing a check or by donating online. To campaigns, the money is what matters, not whether it was received by check, at a campaign office by credit card machine, or acquired by someone putting their card numbers into a campaign's website.

Likewise, in analyzing young people's activism, Maher and Earl (2019) argue that digital and social media work through traditional mobilization pathways for young people—as when friends or parents recommend causes or invite participation in actions through Facebook or text messages—and also work as an independent mobilizing arena for young people who lack traditional supports for activism. Indeed, that online and offline political participation are related and support one another has been found in a range of studies (e.g., Gil de Zúñiga et al. 2010). While new media sometimes also help people route around blocked pathways to participation, they work through operational pathways too (Maher and Earl 2019; 2017).

Moreover, even when new media usage is not at the heart of the activity being studied, pervasive digital and social media use is a key context for political participation (Bimber 2017). For instance, even if one wanted to study in-person political campaign rallies, campaigns don't happen in a digital media vacuum, making it difficult to study them effectively without studying digital elements too, whether that involves K-Pop fans registering for opponents' events to raise and then crush expectations (Newitz 2020), or the significant online disinformation and misinformation efforts that surround many national political campaigns today. Even when events are in-person, such as the storming of the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, they often take place against a backdrop of significant online organization and participants live-streaming and posting pictures of themselves and others on social media to document the occasion. Below, we try to draw out when research handles digital engagements as entirely separable (and often secondary) versus more integrated.

Elections and Campaigns

Political participation takes many forms during elections and campaigns beyond just voting, whether online or off. Digital tools have provided additional gateways for citizens to communicate with campaigns, volunteer, donate money, sign petitions, or connect people to information about voter registration (Kirk and Schill 2011) and for campaigns to mobilize voters, demonstrating our claim that even "offline" participation like voting now often has digital influences. For instance, in terms of expanding avenues for citizen engagement with campaigns, many campaign events take place on television and digital media. In the US, major party nomination conventions and debates garner substantial attention (e.g., Birdsell 2017; Weinschenk and Panagopoulos 2016) and online engagements with debates can increase voter engagement. Kirk and Schill (2011) showed that the YouTube-sponsored presidential debates in 2008 expanded how citizen participation takes place, offering new avenues such as sharing links to the videos in emails and posting comments to discussion boards, the digital equivelent of writing letters to editors or airing grievances in public forums.

In terms of voting behavior, an experiment involving over 61 million Facebook users showed that Facebook messaging "directly influenced political self-expression, information seeking and real-world voting behaviour of millions of people" (Bond et al. 2012). Indeed, the social aspect of social media may boost messaging effectiveness compared to information-only messages: close friends had a stronger normative influence than did the message itself, suggesting that "[o]nline mobilization works because it primarily spreads through strong-tie networks that probably exist offline but have an online representation" (Bond et al. 2012: 298). Building on this work involving online social norms and pressure, Haenschen (2016) demonstrated that Facebook status updates were able to increase voter turnout substantially over what previous studies on face-to-face voter contact had accomplished.

These studies point to another impact of new media on elections and campaigns: how people use their online presence has the potential to shape how others participate politically, challenging the control campaigns hold over messaging and voter turnout (and suppression). While some assumed that digital technologies would democratize campaign communication by increasing the two-way interactivity between candidates and citizens, campaigns have not wanted to lose their hierarchal control over the communication process (Stromer-Galley 2014). From the candidate perspective, campaigns are ultimately about winning, not about genuinely engaging citizens. But, citizens' expectations of candidate engagement looms large because of new technological affordances (Foot and Schneider 2006). Moreover, digital communication technologies have the capacity to allow citizens to take candidate and campaign messages and change their meaning to suit the purpose or whim of the citizen and to do so to a broader potential audience than was possible before. For example, in a study of tweets during the 2012 US presidential debates, Driscoll et al. (2018) observed that instead of parroting candidate statements, one in five tweets made by connected viewers to the events were either "humorous, satirical, snarky, or parodic, or else referred to the humorous discourse of other users" (9). While this may have once only have happened at in-person gatherings, one can now have a public conversation with a wider audience. This makes it incredibly difficult for campaigns to control messaging. Given that many people watch campaign and election events on television and that some viewers alter their experience by engaging in social media while watching them (McKinney, Houston, and Hawthorne 2014), campaigns can no longer assert substantial control over their message.

In 2008, Barack Obama's 2008 campaign appeared to find "the magic formula of providing enough openness to foster genuine engagement while directing that engagement in ways ultimately beneficial for the campaign" (Stromer-Galley 2014: 132–133) by doing things such as creating tools that allowed users higher levels of individual customization but still were directed at goals important to the campaign's success. "Controlled interactivity" allows campaigns to provide opportunities for engagement that maximize the benefits for the candidate. In the 2012 US presidential election, both major party candidates appeared to execute a successful controlled interactivity approach in social media as evidenced by the extent to which their supporters' rhetoric matched the themes of the respective campaigns (Freelon 2017).

These adjustments are in some ways unique but in other ways reflect the way that every election cycle brings with it lessons learned from previous campaigns and new opportunities for candidates and parties to reach out to voters through different media channels and platforms. As new platforms develop—whether television, cable television, or new media—media affordances modify (and often expand) how campaigns reach voters or enhance their messaging (Xenos and Foot 2008). For instance, candidates' websites began sidestepping media gatekeepers in the 1990s and then social media furthered this in the 2000s (Foot and Schneider 2006). Models explaining campaign and election outcomes had to expand the number of channels of influence available to candidates and campaigns to deliver their messages. Kenski and Jamieson (2017) claim more broadly that digital media have "created complexities not envisioned by the workhorse theories of the broadcast age" (914).

It is worth noting that digital communication technologies are not only tools of persuasion and mobilization: they can make voting more convenient. While electronic voting via the internet has not taken off in the US (despite experimentation with it in some US states, e.g., Kenski 2005), other countries, such as Estonia, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, have allowed e-voting. This can itself impact participation: in Estonia, it increased participation by younger voters (Alvarez, Hall, and Trechsel 2009) and increased voting turnout among abstainers and occasional voters in Switzerland (Petitpas, Jaquet, and Sciarini 2020).

PROTEST PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Research on the relationship between social movements and digital and social media has grown exponentially across time, with a number of strong reviews marking different moments in the literature's development (Earl et al. 2015; Earl, Hunt, and Garrett 2014; Garrett 2006) and positioning new media within larger social movement media systems (Caren, Andrews, and Lu 2020). Research has examined the development of uniquely online protest forms (Earl et al. 2010) and the ways in which digital and social media usage may help propel offline movements (Vasi and Suh 2016), among other topics. While there is much that could be said about new media and protest participation, we focus on three topics in this review: (1) the introduction of new forms of power and influence through "flash activism"; (2) effects on micromobilization, including research on potential tradeoffs between different modes of participation; and (3) repression and political participation.

Flash Activism, Not Slacktivism

One of the major innovations brought by digital and social media use has been the creation of a new form of political participation: "flash activism" (Bennett and Fielding 1999). Traditionally social movements are thought to derive influence through their persistent and long-enduring pressure on social and political systems. This has required extensive recruitment and retention efforts to drive continued participation. However, online forms of participation (e.g., online petitions, email campaigns) allow differing sets of participants to be mobilized over time (i.e., not requiring the same level of persistence) and in activities that may take only minutes. Although cynics prefer the denigrating moniker of slacktivism, flash activism actually represents a new model of influence that can be imagined as a flash flood, destabilizing and disrupting systems of power through shocks of attention and outrage. Whether Twitter and Facebook campaigns, distributed denial of service (DDoS) actions, or other forms of online participation, campaigns weaponize ephemeral, but large-scale, bursts of participation, which can be effective at changing government, corporate, and other organizations' policies and practices because of the quick and overwhelming attention flash activism can generate (see Earl 2016 for a review on the consequences of flash activism).

This is important to social movement participation because it shows that even lower-cost forms of online participation that many participate in can still be effective under the right circumstances and can amplify movement messages (Barberá et al. 2015).

Of course, not all flash activism achieves its goals, but the same is also true for traditional offline protest. Instead of asking whether this new source of power based on quick surges in attention can be successful, it is likely better to ask about the conditions under which flash activism is likely to achieve its direct goals. It is also important to ask when activism that emerges online may light a fire that burns into more persistent activism, generating substantial protest participation both online and offline. Consider, for instance, the level of mobilization by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in the US in 2020. While obviously occurring in the shadow of centuries of civil rights and human rights organizing, BLM formed from a set of social media posts using the newly coined #BlackLivesMatter hashtag. #MeToo likewise catalyzed activism around sexual harassment and sexual assault. Understanding the conditions under which online protest is successful on its own terms and/or ignites substantial protest should become more the focus of research, displacing stale debates over slacktivism and whether digital-enabled activism can matter.

Effects on Micromobilization

Research has examined whether digital and social media is effective in mobilizing various forms of protest participation. Research has shown that whether that participation is happening online (Earl and Kimport 2011) or offline (Tufekci and Wilson 2012; Vasi and Suh 2016), new media usage can drive social movement participation (Valenzuela, Arriagada, and Scherman 2012). There has been debate about whether positive mobilization effects are derived only for some participant groups, such as "superactivists" who are ultra-involved already (Van Laer 2010), or can expand participation by bringing in protesters for whom other avenues of recruitment were ineffective (Enjolras, Steen-Johnsen, and Wollebæk 2013; Fisher and Boekkooi 2010; Crossley 2015), but both expect positive effects of new media usage on activism.

Many have worried about tradeoffs between different modes of participation, particularly believing that online mobilization would reduce offline mobilization (Gladwell 2010); research largely does not show such a tradeoff exists (Vissers and Stolle 2014). Instead, different forms of online participation may help spur offline mobilization (Conroy, Feezell, and Guerrero 2012), just as participation in one offline protest may have spurred subsequent offline participation historically. More generally, digital and social media offer unique affordances for protest mobilization, such as reduced costs for participation (Earl and Kimport 2011) and the ability to personalize protest participation (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). Usage may also help sustain activism across time (Rohlinger and Bunnage 2015).

Some have also challenged the extent to which online and offline elements of participation can be separated, since potential participants may interact with their social networks (Pavan 2014) and/or institutions (Maher and Earl 2017, 2019) through both online and offline channels, as one would expect in a hybridized media environment (see "Hybrid Media Systems" section earlier). Moreover, research generally confirms the positive relationship between new media and street mobilizations, as Caren, Andrews, and Lu's (2020) review shows across the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, BLM, and far-right movements.

Other research has argued that how social movement organizations use new media shapes how their members and movement participants are impacted (Bimber, Flanagin, and Stohl 2012). For instance, Rohlinger and Bunnage (2015) argue that hierarchical uses of new media by social movement organizations help to fundraise quickly and achieve short-term goals, but less hierarchical uses are more effective at building a sense of community. Karpf (2012) argues that new media usage allows generalist social movement organizations such as MoveOn to outcompete specialist social movement organizations (e.g., NAACP, NOW) that have a narrower fundraising base and less of an ability to attach themselves quickly to issues of the day. Likewise, organizations that use internal analytics wisely can learn how to better mobilize their constituents (Karpf 2016). There are some organizational processes that may operate similarly, including coalition formation (Abul-Fottouh and Fetner 2018) although not all researchers agree that coalition formation is unaltered by new media usage (Bennett and Segerberg 2013).

Repression

Scholars have also questioned whether new media are actually dangerous for social movements, as when misinformation or disinformation circulates about specific social movements (see Earl et al. 2021 on this emerging area). The most significant concern, though, has been around internet-enabled repression, with scholars worrying that by providing powerful new surveillance and repressive tools, the internet is undermining any democratizing influence (Grasso and Bessant 2018; Morozov 2011; Tufekci 2017) and limiting political participation.

There is reason to believe that fears about the negative impacts of digital and social media-enabled state repression may be too dystopian. First, Deibert et al. (2010) identify three periods in state-based digital censorship: (1) limitations on network access; (2) censorship of specific material; and (3) so-called "active engagement" in which governments try to flood social media with information they prefer to "distract the public and change the subject" (King, Pan, and Roberts 2017: 484). Many argue that most governments, including more authoritarian governments, depend more on active engagement than either of the other two strategies, which suggests governments may distract more than they actively repress.

Second, the effect of repression on participation has long been uncertain, no matter the form of repression (Earl 2011). In fact, repression, including the repression of online activities, may actually backfire, radicalizing current protesters and mobilizing new ones (Earl and Schussman 2004: Odabaş and Reynolds-Stenson 2018: Earl and Beyer 2014). Even without causing backfire, repression may only deter those directly impacted by severe repression, not wider movements (Pan and Siegel 2020).

Third, new media may also be used to upset relationships between authorities and protesters, as when Twitter users reduce information advantages that police have typically enjoyed at street protests (Earl et al. 2013). New media have also shown promise in documenting and sharing state abuses against protesters, which has helped to bring scrutiny to government actions from the US to Hong Kong (Barker et al. 2021; Shibani et al. 2019).

One area that does need more attention is on the potential of private repressors to use new media to discourage activism. This can occur through online harassment campaigns like Gamer Gate (Massanari 2017) and is much more widespread than many realize

(Sobieraj 2020). Research on the impacts of these private harassment campaigns needs more development.

Other Forms of Political Engagement

A wide variety of other forms of political participation can be supported by new media and/or engaged in online including civic engagement, political consumption, and participatory politics, among others. In terms of civic engagement, as with other forms of participation, there appears to be a positive relationship between online political engagement and offline civic engagement (Ferrucci, Hopp, and Vargo 2020). In her meta-analysis assessment of 20 years of digital media effects on political participation, Boulianne (2020) examines civic engagement activities such as volunteering alongside protest and election campaign participation measures, finding small but positive effects of digital media on political participation that grew substantially over time, presumably because digital media have become integrated in people's personal and public lives.

Political consumption is a form of political participation in which consumers use ethical or moral commitments to inform their purchases, including foregoing purchases (i.e., boycotts) and also preferring specific products or brands (i.e., buycotts). A recent comprehensive meta-analysis of research on political consumption shows that new media use encourages political consumption too (Copeland and Boulianne 2020), and such consumption may take place in viritual or physical stores.

Participatory politics involves political participation focused on investigation, sharing, and content production and/or remixing that can include activities like investigative reporting and also meme production (Soep 2014). Examples may include: "circulation (i.e., sharing of information), dialogue and feedback (e.g., blog comments), production of content (e.g., making a video), investigation (i.e., pursuit of information beyond established sources), and mobilization (e.g., voting or protest participation)" (Earl, Scovill, and Ramo 2021). Research suggests that digital and social media provide uniquely important affordances for participatory politics, not just supporting this form of participation, but in some cases actually enabling it (Cohen et al. 2012).

Conclusion

Research on the relationship between political participation and digital and social media has made major strides over time. There is a greater appreciation of the hybrid media system, of which new media are a critical part. Even seemingly offline participation is impacted by new media in a hybridized media environment, and this is true for both campaigns/elections and social movements, as we have shown in this review. There is also now greater appreciation for the ways in which what was once thought of as online versus offline political engagement now blends together, supporting each another. Indeed, contemporary forms of political participation tend to have some digital supports or components, making it important that researchers integrate concerns about new media into their research even if they do not see themselves as media researchers.

There are also unique forms of political participation that can only happen online (e.g., distributed denial of service actions), unique forms of power enabled by new media, and important sharing, personalization, and interactional affordances offered by new media, among other unique affordances. For instance, we discuss flash activism as a new format for participation and new form of social movement power that has achieved important successes. When examining these seemingly new elements, though, it is important that scholars who see themselves as media researchers connect with the well-developed and long-standing literatures on different forms of political participation. For instance, it should not continue to be acceptable to study online activism without being conversant in research on social movements generally. In other words, we argue that distinctions between online and offline participation are hard to sustain even if distinctions between institutional and extra-institutional political participation are still important. Our review of several major forms of political participation (e.g., elections, protest, civic engagement, etc.) show the promises and dilemmas that new media usage brings. In most cases, we argued new media usage supported participation.

Bringing these ideas together, it is our hope that in ten years a volume such as this one would not have a separate chapter on digital and social media and political participation, particularly within a section of types of engagement, but rather that every chapter covering contemporary political participation would necessarily include research and theory involving the dynamic interactions between digital and social media, legacy media, and face-to-face communication. Part of this aspiration is based on the hybridity of online and offline life but part of it is also based on our commitment to the idea that different forms of political participation—such as elections and social movements—should not be bundled together just because they occur online. There are meaningful distinctions between institutionalized and non-institutional political participation, whether they occur offline or online. For instance, with campaigns/elections, we showed that new media can be used to extend messaging and motivate voters, but it has drawbacks for campaigns like making it more difficult to control the message. For social movements, new media can be used to support participation despite a number of scholars' fears about repression using digital tools.

A critical research frontier involves deeply understanding how new media affects equitable participation across different social groups. For instance, do digital and social media exacerbate inequalities in political participation that have endured offline or compensate for them (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012)? We hope researchers direct their attention to the ways in which different forms of political participation can be made more accessible, inclusive, and impactful through the incorporation of digital and social media.

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CHAPTER 27

BRIDGING ELECTORAL AND NONELECTORAL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

ENDRE BORBÁTH AND SWEN HUTTER

While the central question of political participation research, "who participates, how, and why," is as old as survey research, it was not until Barnes and Kaase's (1979) seminal study that the tools of quantitative survey research were applied to the world of protest behavior. Although labeled "unconventional" at that time, Barnes and Kaase (1979: 793) already observed that participation outside the institutional realm of politics had become increasingly normalized and widespread, constituting an "extension of citizen's political action repertoire." Nevertheless, up to this point, research on electoral and nonelectoral participation was still often disconnected from each other (also see chapter 1).

In this chapter, we review the emerging scholarship that emphasizes what we call "arena bridging," that is, those individuals and collective actors that *combine* electoral and nonelectoral participation. Following the classical rift in research on political participation and mobilization (Kriesi 2008), we consider studies on the individual and organizational levels of analysis. The former focuses on individual-level determinants of voting and protesting, their combination in individuals' action repertoires, and its variation across contexts. The latter aims to explain the ups and downs of turnout and protest levels by examining the resources and opportunities exploited by the mobilizing collective actors, driving the ebb and flow of participation. Building on these two strands of the scholarly literature, we provide an integrative perspective to explain the extent and drivers of arena bridging. We identify key factors that distinguish individuals who act as bridge-builders, networks mobilizing in both the electoral and protest arena, and the context conditions facilitating such bridging dynamics.

To do so, we focus on voting and attending lawful public demonstrations, two typical forms of electoral and nonelectoral participation. While both are relatively widespread, the extent to which citizens rely on them to politically participate varies both over time and across individuals, embedded in the same or different national contexts. Our central argument is that individual-level predictors cannot sufficiently explain the variation in the extent to which citizens combine voting and demonstrating. Individual-level differences—such as a person's sociodemographic status, attitudes toward politics, ideology, and partisanship—are essential pre-requisites of political participation. To understand the extent to which citizens bridge electoral and nonelectoral forms in their action repertoire over time, we need to focus on contextual differences consisting of both structural conditions and the dynamic flow of opportunities for participation provided by a broad range of mobilizing agents.

On the individual level, "exclusive demonstrators" are rare, and if people participate in protests, bridging is the norm (e.g. Giugni and Grasso 2019; Oser 2017). However, as we emphasize, the individual-level action repertoire is contingent upon the broader landscape of political organizations and mobilization. We take Europe's current crises as a prime example of a context where an increasing number of citizens have felt the need to enter more than one mass politics arena. How such a "crisis effect" unfolds depends on initial conditions (defined by historical legacies, differing political cultures, and existing cleavage structures) and the strategies of political entrepreneurs that decide to mobilize in both the electoral and the protest arena. In such exceptional moments, it is more likely to observe a close coupling of electoral and nonelectoral political participation and the emergence of a new coalition of actors with the capacity to redraw conflict lines. The chapter illustrates the blurring boundaries between electoral and nonelectoral mobilization and its repercussions on individual-level behavior based on survey and protest event data.

In what follows, we first review research, zooming-in on the individual-level determinants of electoral and nonelectoral participation. Moreover, this part illustrates the profiles of those who bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation based on the European Social Survey and the European Values Study. We focus on five European countries representing what can be called different "worlds of contention" across the European continent (Borbáth and Gessler 2020). As we argue, these differences have been reinforced in the contemporary period of multiple crises and cleavage transformation (e.g., Hooghe and Marks 2018; Hutter and Kriesi 2019; Kriesi et al. 2020). In the second part of the chapter, we focus on explaining the aggregate volatility of participation levels, emphasizing mobilizing networks and the opportunities they exploit. The chapter concludes with directions for future research.

Arena Bridging on the Individual Level

The contrast between those who participate and those who do not participate is the primary focus of research on individual-level differences in political participation. As ample research demonstrates, the probability of participating in the electoral (e.g., Lijphart 1997) or the nonelectoral arenas (Teorell et al. 2007) is not equal across different social groups. To a varying degree, socioeconomically better-endowed individuals are more likely to participate (Dalton 2017; Solt 2008). Such inequality in political participation carries the risk of reinforcing socioeconomic inequalities by fostering unequal responsiveness by policymaking institutions, favoring the "haves" over the "have nots" (Bartels 2016; Peters and Ensink 2015).

While nonelectoral participation could theoretically serve as a corrective mechanism by giving a voice to those who do not participate in elections, the literature finds the opposite effect. At the individual level, nonelectoral participation complements electoral participation for at least two reasons. First, given the lower cost of voting and the weakening, albeit still existing, societal expectation to turn out, political participation in the electoral arena is relatively speaking less unequal (e.g., Teorell, Sum, and Tobiasen 2007). Citizens who do not turn out at elections are by and large less interested in politics, politically demobilized, and do not follow the news as regularly. Thus, they are even less likely to participate in costlier, and therefore more selective nonelectoral forms. Second, as we detail in the next section, the main agents of electoral mobilization, political parties, also directly mobilize their supporters across Europe in the protest arena (Borbáth and Hutter 2021). Consequently, party identification is among the best predictors of electoral and nonelectoral participation (Aelst and Walgrave 2001; Borbáth and Gessler 2020). To a large extent, those who participate in nonelectoral forms are not the political outsiders otherwise unrepresented, but resemble those most likely to turn out on election day.

Consequently, electoral and nonelectoral participation have similar individual-level predictors. On average, individuals from a higher social class, with higher levels of education and income, who are politically interested, efficacious, and can self-identify on a left-right scale, or with one of the parties, are more likely to participate. However, the predictive power of these factors varies over time and between different systems. When it comes to over-time variation, the literature documents how impressionable years (Mannheim 1952) leave an imprint on political generations in terms of their electoral (Franklin 2004) and nonelectoral participation (Joly 2018; Grasso et al. 2019). Regarding cross-sectional variation, the scholarly literature focuses on the extent to which protest is normalized, having evolved from a sporadic to a perpetual element of politics. More diverse constituencies protest for a broader range of claims, and social movements themselves have become professionalized and more conventional over time (Meyer and Tarrow 1998: 4). In this regard, the literature distinguishes between old and new democracies (Dalton et al. 2010), systems with different levels of openness (Braun and Hutter 2016), historical legacies (Borbáth and Gessler 2020), or dominant values (Welzel and Deutsch 2012).

While most of these individual-level predictors (e.g., education, income, political interest, and party identification) travel across contexts, two factors stand out, as their effects on nonelectoral participation tend to be contingent on the national context: political trust and ideological beliefs. For example, Braun and Hutter (2016) show that political distrust leads to nonelectoral participation in more open systems in political and cultural terms. In more closed systems, the relationship between trust and nonelectoral participation is weaker, that is those who protest resemble political insiders and trust no less in political institutions. Regarding ideological beliefs, Borbáth and Gessler (2020) show that previous findings about the strong left-wing dominance in Europe's protest arena (e.g., van der Meer, van Deth, and Scheepers 2009) are moderated by historical and contemporary regime access. In Southern Europe, where the left has historically been in opposition and remained unreformed, its presence in the protest arena is higher than in Northwestern Europe. In Eastern Europe, where the left has historically been in government, it is least present in the protest arena.

Despite its focus on similar predictors, this strand of literature rarely links electoral and nonelectoral participation in an integrative framework. Notable exceptions are studies that examine changes in individual-level political "tool kits" or action repertoires with reference to changing citizenship norms (e.g., Dalton 2008; Oser 2017; Teorell 2006). Dalton (2008) shows a shift from what he labels "duty based" toward "engaged" citizenship norms. Although newer generations are less likely to vote than older ones, they are more likely to participate in non-institutional forms. Contrary to the "substitutive" effect Dalton (2008) uncovers, Oser (2017) does not find evidence of a group specialized in electoral participation. Instead, she shows that those who participate in non-institutional forms are also more likely to participate in elections. These "all-around activists" drive participation rates, while a large part of the citizenry is detached from both institutional and non-institutional politics. Continuing with this research focus, in what follows, we illustrate the way individuals combine electoral and nonelectoral participation in their action repertoire, based on mass-population surveys.

Methodologically, the different surveys make divergent choices in how to measure political participation. One avenue consists of questions that include a timeframe, typically the previous 12 months, and ask the respondent to indicate whether they have done any form of political participation included in the questionnaire. A prominent example is the political participation battery in the *European Social Survey* (ESS). Another approach asks respondents whether they have ever done, might do, or would never do, any of the forms of political participation included in the questionnaire without a specified timeframe. The most prominent comparative surveys with such an item are the *World Value Survey* and the *European Values Study* (EVS).

To examine how citizens combine electoral and nonelectoral political participation, we selected the largest EU member states (i.e., France, Germany, Poland, and Spain) plus Sweden. The five countries well represent the dynamics of electoral and nonelectoral mobilization in Europe's three macro-regions (Northwestern, Southern, and Central-Eastern Europe) and correspond to what can be called "different worlds of contention" (see the following section, this chapter). Based on their voting behavior and attendance of lawful public demonstrations, we group individual respondents into four categories:[1] 1) "passive citizens" who do not vote or attend demonstrations; 2) "exclusive voters" who vote but do not attend demonstrations; 3) "exclusive protesters" who attend demonstrations but do not vote and 4) "arena bridgers" who both vote and attend demonstrations and, thus, represent the substantively most crucial group for the current chapter. Figure 27.1 presents the share of the four categories in the ESS and EVS.

As the results in Figure 27.1 indicate, the methodological choices that have been outlined have important implications for identifying the level of political participation. When asked about having voted or demonstrated at some point in their life, without a specified timeframe (Figure 27.1b), most respondents indicate that they have at least voted, and many of them have attended demonstrations. Unsurprisingly, these shares are much lower when asked to report on behavior during the previous 12 months (Figure 27.1a), which underscores that political participation fluctuates throughout an individual's lifespan. However, in terms of the relative share of our four groups, the two surveys paint a very similar picture: on average most citizens vote, a minority of them also attend demonstrations, and some are politically passive. The share of exclusive demonstrators is minuscule, with a medium value of 1 percent in both surveys. The share of those who bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation varies. While this group is far from being as large as those who exclusively vote, they are not negligible—even in Poland, the country with the lowest shares, representing 2 (ESS)/11 (EVS) percent of the population. The cross-national variation of the five countries corresponds to the regional story: the share of "bridge-builders" follows the distribution of

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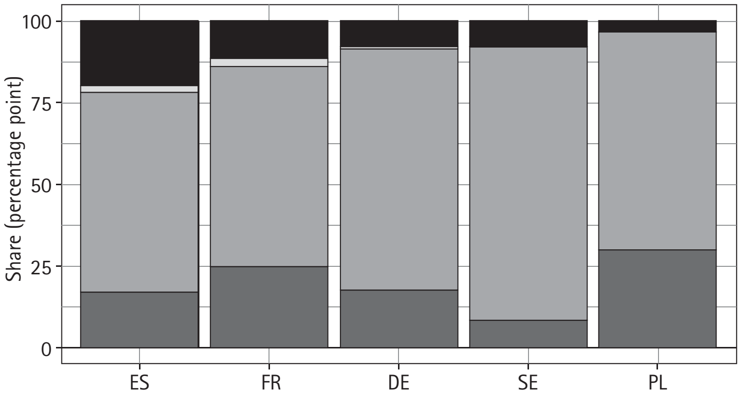
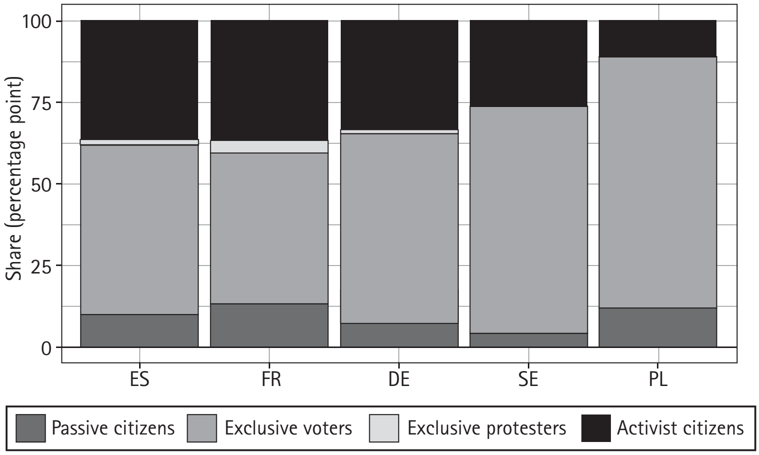
[1] We exclude those who are not eligible to vote.

(a) European Social Survey (2002-2018)–have you in the previous 12 months?



(b) European Values Study (2017)–have you ever?



Note: All results are weighted, based on ESS rounds 1-9, EVS 2017 wave;
activist citizens bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation.

FIGURE 27.1 Bridging Electoral and Nonelectoral Participation in Five European Countries. a) European Social Survey (2002-2018)—have you in the previous 12 months? b) European Values Study (2017)—have you ever?

Note: All results are weighted, based on ESS rounds 1-9, EVS 2017 wave;
activist citizens bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation.

nonelectoral participation, being highest in Spain (representing Southern Europe), followed by France, Germany, Sweden (representing Northwestern Europe), and lowest in Poland (representing Eastern Europe).

Next, we empirically illustrate the factors which distinguish those who bridge electoral and protest participation from exclusive voters. To do so, we ran a logistic regression model with bridging vs. exclusively voting as the dependent variable, using the latest ESS round (9) conducted in 2018–2019. We distinguish between four sets of standard individual-level predictors of participation already outlined: (1) sociodemographic factors, (2) attitudinal

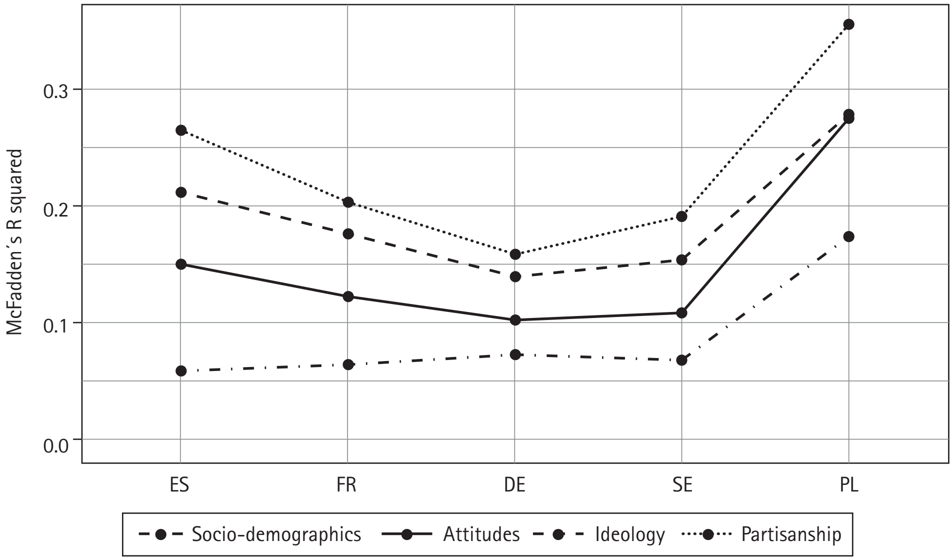


FIGURE 27.2 McFadden's R^2 of Logistic Regression Models Distinguishing Arena Bridgers from Exclusive Voters

Note: The models were estimated on the ESS round 9 (2018–2019) sample.

factors, (3) ideology, and (4) partisanship.[2] To examine these factors' predictive power in differentiating exclusive voters from bridging activists, we included the four different types of variables sequentially, building up a model that includes all four sets of variables. Figure 27.2 reports McFadden's R^2 of the corresponding models for the five countries we examine. The marginal increase of McFadden's R^2 values shows the variance explained by including the additional independent variables in the model.

As the figure shows, these factors go quite some way to explain which citizens bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation. The explained variance ranges from about 35 percent in Poland to below 20 percent in Germany. In Germany and Sweden, the ones who bridge arenas are the most similar to exclusive voters. In these countries, most of the individual-level differences are due to sociodemographic factors. In Spain and France, attitudes and ideology account for a larger part of the variance. In Spain, partisanship also appears to be critical on top of ideological factors. In Poland, general left-right ideology is not as important a factor, but political attitudes and partisanship are.

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[2] Among socio-demographic factors, we include age, age squared, number of years spent in education, gender, subjective income (4 points), the type of locality where the respondent lives (5 points). We also include two dichotomous measures related to "biographical availability" (Schussman and Soule 2005) to distinguish respondents who are students, retired, doing housework, or unemployed, as well as those who have children living at home. Finally, we also include social class, with the eight categories distinguished by Oesch (2006). As attitudinal factors, we include the ones which differentiate respondents based on their stance towards the political system: political interest (4 points), satisfaction with democracy (11 points), trust in parliament (11 points), external and internal efficacy (5 points). As ideological factors, we include self-placement on the left–right scale (11 points) and a measure of extremity to distinguish those who place themselves towards either end of this scale (6 points). To account for the respondents' partisanship, we include the strength of party identification (5 points), working in a party (2 points), and whether or not the party the respondent voted for has been in government in the previous 12 months.

Table 27.1 presents the odds ratios of the attitudinal, ideological, and partisanship factors from the respective models. As the table shows, among the attitudinal factors, political interest appears to be decisive in all five countries, albeit to a varying extent. In contrast, trust in parliament does not make much of a difference, and satisfaction with democracy is also only marginally important in Spain, France, and Poland for explaining the "exclusive voter-bridging activist" difference. Internal efficacy appears to have a substantively and statistically significant effect in four countries (except in Germany), whereas external efficacy does not have a distinguishable effect in any of the five countries. In terms of ideology, left-wing individuals are more likely to protest in the four older democracies, but not in Poland. Also, as the extremity measure shows, individuals on the extreme right are likely to demonstrate in France and Germany. In terms of partisanship, working in a party has a substantively and statically significant effect in all five countries. The strength of party identification only appears to be important in Spain. Finally, supporting opposition parties increases the odds of demonstrating in addition to voting in Poland and Germany.

Overall, our illustrative results show that bridging electoral and nonelectoral participation is not uncommon, and—especially when asked about their entire life-course—a relatively large share of citizens engages in both forms of political engagement. In this regard, Spain stands out, where at least a fifth, or according to the EVS, 37 percent of citizens have combined electoral and nonelectoral participation, indeed signaling a shift toward more participatory citizenship norms. Generally, nonelectoral participation remains an add-on for electoral participation and does not substitute for it. Some individual-level characteristics distinguish those who *also* attend demonstrations from those who exclusively vote. While the exact factors vary between the different countries and European regions, our

Table 27.1 Selected Coefficients Explaining the Difference between Arena Bridgers and Exclusive Voters—Odds Ratios

	ES	FR	DE	SE	PL
Political interest	**1.82**	**1.31**	**1.81**	**1.82**	**2.74**
Satisfaction with democracy	**0.86**	**0.83**	0.98	1.06	**0.85**
Trust in parliament	1.02	1.07	0.97	0.95	1.06
External efficacy	0.87	0.92	1.21	1.03	1.28
Internal efficacy	**1.42**	**1.51**	1.13	**1.29**	**1.54**
Left-right scale	**0.73**	**0.81**	**0.86**	**0.78**	0.94
Extremity	0.99	**1.18**	**1.23**	1.06	1.01
Strength of PID	**1.24**	0.98	1.24	1.11	1.21
Working in a party	**8.24**	**6.82**	**2.24**	**5.33**	**14.89**
Opposition party	1.31	1.56	**1.84**	0.89	**4.11**

Note: coefficients, statistically significant at the p<0.05 level, are highlighted in bold.

findings confirm that “bridging participants” are political insiders. Individuals who bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation are interested in politics, believe that they can make a difference, usually hold strong ideological beliefs, and identify with political parties.

Arena Bridging in Context

Despite cross-country variation, the literature review and our empirical analysis underscore that individuals’ characteristics can only account to some extent for the differences in arena bridging. To further explore the conditions under which bridging is most likely, we now turn to research focusing more closely on the meso-level of political entrepreneurs and how they respond and contribute to broader processes of social and political change. A key strand is situated in social movements studies and aims to explain differences in the protest activity across countries (e.g., Kriesi et al. 1995; Rucht 1994) or the emergence and decline of protest waves or cycles (Beissinger 2002; Koopmans and Olzak 2004; e.g., McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1989). A central finding in this literature mirrors what we have discussed based on individual-level differences. In regular times, only a selected set of networks and organizations is present in the protest arena. If we keep the temporal and national contexts constant, the issues along which they mobilize are often less well represented in the electoral arena (Císař and Vráblíková, 2019; Giugni and Grasso 2019; Kriesi et al. 1995). However, in moments of crisis and cleavage transformation, when the structure of political conflict is being transformed by large-scale political mobilization around previously not represented issues, cleavage coalitions may more frequently mobilize in both the electoral and protest arenas.

The way the dynamic interactions across protest and electoral unfolds is context-dependent, and—as we have already argued in the previous section—it may play out differently depending on the long-term trajectory of Europe’s macro-regions (for detailed accounts, see Bojár et al., 2021; Hutter and Kriesi 2019; Kriesi, Lorenzini et al. 2020). In general, this strand of literature aims to re-embed the study of protest dynamics in the broader context of the study of political conflict to understand better who participates and why in the different arenas of mass politics.

In Northwestern Europe, the literature distinguishes two waves of mobilization in the long-term dynamics of protest and electoral politics. The first wave, initially triggered by the 1968 student movements, focused on the environmental issue and broader questions of cultural liberalism. The institutionalized form of the movement, Green parties, entered parliament in almost all Northwestern European countries and extended the scope of mobilization to the electoral arena. The second wave of mobilization starting in the 1990s was driven by a backlash dynamic against globalization and found its most robust expression in the politicization of immigration and European integration as the twin issues of cleavage realignment at the time (Hooghe and Marks 2018; Hutter and Kriesi 2019; Kriesi et al. 2012; Rovny and Polk 2018; Vries and Hobolt 2020). At least in Northwestern Europe, the second wave of mobilization has left a much more decisive mark on the electoral arena, explained by the differential logics that the left and right follow when it comes to the combination of protest and electoral mobilization: while the left “waxes and wanes” in both the electoral and protest arenas simultaneously; the right instead follows an “either/or” logic, mobilizing more intensely on the streets if it has not gained ground in electoral politics (Hutter 2014a; Hutter and Borbáth 2019).

In Southern Europe, these two waves of political mobilization have been much more limited—for reasons that have to do with the countries' political legacy (long-lasting authoritarian regimes and strong communist parties, i.e., a strong "old" left) and with the fact that they had been emigration countries until more recently.[3] However, under the impact of the combined economic and political crises that shook Southern Europe during the Great Recession, new parties of the radical left, such as *Syriza*, and *Podemos*, have surged in Greece, Spain, and (to a more limited extent) in Portugal. In contrast, Italy has seen the rise of a movement-party, the *Five Star Movement (M5S)*, which declared itself "neither left nor right" and combines an ecological agenda with anti-immigration mobilization. The rise of these parties has substantially transformed the respective party systems (Hutter and Kriesi 2019; Morlino and Raniolo 2017). Notably, these transformations have been linked to the protest wave in the region (della Porta 2015; Kriesi, Lorenzini et al. 2020), mobilizing the grievances accumulated throughout the economic crisis and leading to the reconfiguration of the party systems and traditional conflict structures. The new parties that appeared on the political scene sponsored demonstrations in this period (della Porta et al. 2017) and benefited from the discursive momentum created by these protests (Bremer et al. 2020; Kim 2020).

Compared to the Southern European region, where new parties instrumentalized the organizational network created by the emerging protest wave during the crisis, it was established political parties that mobilized more strongly in the protest arena in Eastern Europe (Borbáth and Hutter 2021). Although the party systems in the region are seemingly volatile (Emanuele et al. 2020), new parties often mobilize around existing programmatic positions and effectively take over the programmatic role their organizational predecessors played in the party system (Borbáth 2021; Rovny and Polk 2017). At the same time, the protest arena follows its own issue agenda, distinct from electoral politics (Císař and Vráblíková 2019), but with low participation figures (Borbáth and Gessler 2020; Kostelka 2014). Combined with the relatively low participation figures in civil society organizations (Bernhard 1996; Howard 2003) and in elections (Kostadinova and Power 2007), the role partisan elites play as mobilizing agents becomes particularly essential. As they are the organizational force able to mobilize in both the protest and electoral arena successfully, political parties' role goes beyond following the short-term, strategic logic of electoral competition. They appear as even more potent agents of cleavage transformation themselves compared to the other two European macro-regions (Enyedi 2005).

To explore over-time and across-context differences in protest dynamics and organizational landscapes, the field relies on a diverse set of methods (della Porta 2014). To study how the profile of demonstrators varies across countries, issue fields, and organizational sponsors, surveying protesters "in action" provides a widespread methodological alternative to the population surveys used in the studies covered so far (Andretta and della Porta 2014; Giugni and Grasso 2019; van Aelst and Walgrave 2001). In the study of the long-term dynamics of protest and its development in multiple countries, protest event analysis (Hutter 2014b) based on manual (Císař and Vráblíková 2019; Hutter 2014a; Kriesi et al. 1995) or

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[3] Compared to the electoral results in NWE, radical right parties have not been able to get a foot on the ground in SE up to the most recent period; the main exception being the Italian Lega Nord (Betz 1993).

Table 27.2 Aggregate-Level Turnout

	Demonstration Turnout	Electoral Turnout
Spain	8.08	72.37
France	6.49	61.37
Germany	1.65	76.25
Sweden	1.05	82.79
Poland	0.52	48.07

Note: the values of electoral turnout are based on the Voter Turnout Database (IDEA 2020). The values of demonstration turnout are based on the PolDem-Protest Dataset 30 European Countries (Kriesi, Wüest et al. 2020) weighted participation figures, as compared to the number of registered voters provided by the Voter Turnout Database.

automated coding techniques (Kriesi, Lorenzini et al. 2020) is a standard method. The data collection is typically conducted based on media or, at times, police sources.

To illustrate the regional differences in bridging electoral and nonelectoral participation, we now rely on protest event data collected for the period 2000–2015 by Kriesi et al. (2020). We supplement the protest data with aggregate-level turnout figures in national parliamentary elections based on the Voter Turnout Database (IDEA 2020). From the Kriesi et al. (2020) dataset, we selected public demonstrations to make the results comparable to what we have reported based on individual-level mass surveys. To match the demonstrations with the electoral turnout, we calculate the total number of participants who participated in a public demonstration between two consecutive national parliamentary elections (for a similar technique, see Bremer et al. 2020). To bring the demonstration and electoral turnout figures to the same denominator, we calculate demonstration turnout as a share of the number of registered voters reported by the Voter Turnout Database (IDEA 2020). Table 27.2 presents the average demonstration and electoral turnout in the same five European countries introduced before.

As the section “Arena Bridging on the Individual Level” has shown, attending demonstrations is a far less widespread form of political participation than taking part in national elections. Nevertheless, demonstration turnout is the driver of the extent of bridging between the two arenas. Albeit low, the aggregate figures show pronounced country-level differences. Importantly, these differences mirror the previous rank order: the lowest protest levels in Poland, followed by Sweden and Germany, with much higher shares in France and Spain. In contrast to the “complementary logic” on the level of individual respondents, there is no strong cross-country relationship between aggregate protest levels and electoral turnout; the latter being highest in Sweden and by far lowest in Poland (on the reasons for varying turnout, see Chapter 22 by Mark Franklin, this volume).

To utilize the potential of the aggregate-level datasets and map participation figures *over time*, Figure 27.3 shows the development of demonstration and electoral turnout between 2000 and 2015. The figure illustrates the different logics followed by the dynamics of protest and electoral politics. The former develops in waves and peaks around heightened

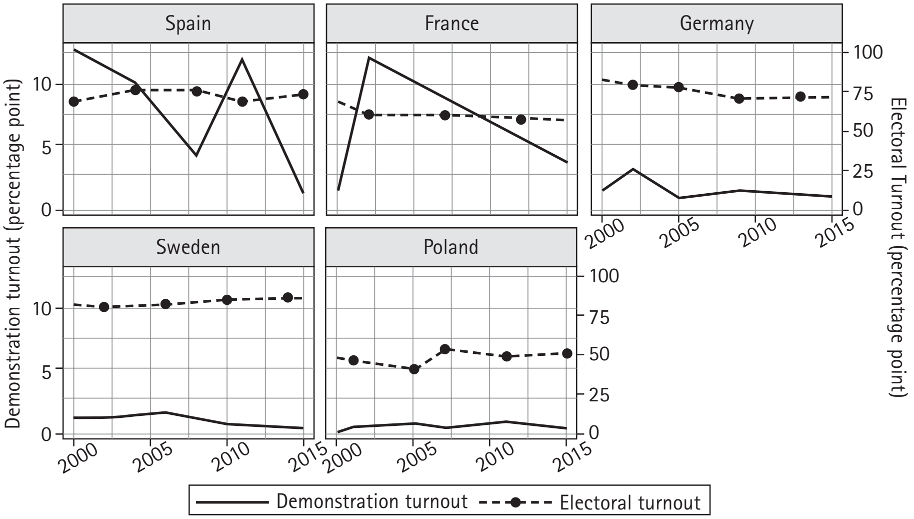

FIGURE 27.3 Aggregate-Level Turnout Over Time

Note: the values of electoral turnout are based on the Voter Turnout Database (IDEA, 2020). The values of demonstration turnout are based on the PolDem-Protest Dataset 30 European Countries (Kriesi, Wüest et al. 2020) weighted participation figures, as compared to the number of registered voters provided by the Voter Turnout Database.

moments of contention, whereas electoral participation follows a more stable, habitual participation logic (Franklin, Chapter 22, this volume). The election turnout trends in Germany and France illustrate the well-documented, slow decline in electoral participation (e.g., Mair 2013). The trend is more stable in the other three countries, and even slightly increasing in Sweden. The only rupture in electoral participation rates can be observed in Poland, where after the collapse of the "old" party system in 2005, the participation figure increased by more than 10 percentage points as polarization heightened between the two main parties, *Civic Platform* and *Law and Justice*, in the context of the 2007 parliamentary election. The protest levels point to two peaks: one at the beginning of the 2000s and the second one related to the Great Recession after 2008. The first wave combines transnational mobilizations related to the war in Iraq and the global justice movement with domestic conflicts such as protests against welfare retrenchment and pension reforms in Germany and France. The first wave is noticeable in the protest arena of Spain, France, and Germany. Albeit to a lower level, it is also present in Sweden and Poland. The second wave characterizes the Spanish protest landscape the most, reflecting the broader context of the crisis-related protest wave in Southern Europe during this period (e.g., della Porta 2015; Kriesi, Lorenzini et al. 2020).

Although electoral and nonelectoral participation complements each other at the individual level, this is not the case for the over-time trends at the aggregate level. As Figure 27.3 illustrates, the two follow a different dynamic, and protest activity mostly peaks when electoral participation is at a lower point. In four of the five countries, the two trend lines are negatively correlated, with an average Pearson correlation coefficient of r = -0.6. Only in Germany do the two trends show a weak positive correlation of 0.3.

To exemplify the dynamic development of protest and electoral politics, we briefly discuss the post-crisis development in Spain, the most protest-rich country among the five we examine, and therefore, the context where it is the most likely that citizens bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation. As a result of the European management of the economic crisis, what started as a banking crisis quickly turned into a sovereign debt crisis threatening the Eurozone's existence. In Spain, the crisis found a seemingly well-functioning party system, dominated by the rotating rule of a large right-wing *People's Party (PP)* and a large social-democratic *Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE)* party. However, under the surface, distrust against the political elite has been growing. Faced with a dire economic situation and increasing European pressure, the mainstream left in government, *PSOE*, announced severe austerity measures throughout 2009 and 2010 (e.g., Bremer and Vidal 2018). Consequently, Spain saw union-organized protest against the measures early in the crisis (e.g., Kriesi, Lorenzini et al. 2020; Portos García 2016). However, the protests experienced a turning point in 2011 when further non-institutional actors entered the scene: *15M* (named after the first large-scale protests on May 15, 2011). *15M* and the battle cry of the central organizing network *Democracia Real, Ya! (Real Democracy Now)* led, after the first demonstration with about 20,000 participants on *Puertas del Sol*, two weeks of mass protests and camps across the country, challenging the government caught in the dilemma of responsiveness and responsibility (Mair 2013). The resulting protest wave constitutes one of the largest protest mobilizations in recent years across Europe (Kriesi, Lorenzini et al. 2020), focusing on economic issues and questions of democratic representation, political reform, and anti-corruption, issues previously unrepresented in the party system. The double crisis of economic mismanagement and political distrust resulted in two new parties, *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos*, entering parliament in 2015 (Vidal 2018). From the two, only *Podemos* was indirectly linked to the protest movement by riding the momentum the protest created (Kim 2020). As the party became successful, the struggle moved from the protest to the electoral arena, and the size of protest participation declined. The transformation of the party system and the emergence of the new/old politics divide transformed post-crisis Spanish politics and became a long-term consequence of protest mobilization by the *15M movement* (della Porta et al. 2017; Hutter et al. 2018). The Spanish example aptly illustrates that, under such exceptional circumstances of crises and party system reconfiguration, the bridging of electoral and nonelectoral participation tends to be most pronounced in scope and impact.

CONCLUSION: BRIDGING ARENAS *AND* RESEARCH FIELDS

In the present chapter, we examined political participation across the electoral and protest arena. We focused on describing and explaining the extent to which individuals combine voting and attending demonstrations in their action repertoire. The core argument we derive from the scholarly literature and the empirical analysis we presented is the need to account for when people bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation. As long as scholars exclusively focus on either the electoral or the protest arena, participation research aiming to better understand political change processes remains blind in one eye.

More specifically, we have distinguished between two levels of analysis in examining the bridging of electoral and nonelectoral participation. As we have argued, on the individual level, protest participation is complementary to voting. Consequently, those who bridge the electoral and protest arenas resemble political insiders, well-informed, and politically endowed citizens. In contrast, on the aggregate level, trends in electoral and demonstration turnout may often follow a substitutive logic. When electoral participation is high, turnout in demonstration tends to be lower, and vice-versa. Exceptions from this pattern are represented by periods of cleavage transformation and realignment when the political frontlines are being redrawn by political entrepreneurs, often hybrid actors, that mobilize simultaneously in electoral and protest politics. In these critical periods, citizens who bridge electoral and nonelectoral forms are activated. We have illustrated this dynamic with the post-crisis development of Spanish politics, the rise and fall of the 15M movement, and Podemos' entry into the Spanish party system.

The empirical analysis we presented indicates that individual-level analyses are insufficient to explain the ebb and flow of political participation. A significant part of the variance is due to structural differences across countries (in our case, European macro-regions) and the strategies of mobilizing agents. This is why we think that it is critical for the development of the participation literature to pay greater attention to time-varying contextual factors and the incentives faced by collective political actors. While the data is less readily available than mass-population surveys, the methodological advances we reviewed in terms of protest event analysis or interviewing activists on site remain viable alternatives and complements to traditional representative surveys.

One question for future research we would like to highlight is related to the dynamics of crisis politics. It remains to be seen whether periods when hybrid actors mobilize in both the electoral and protest arenas, represent exceptions or whether they constitute early signs of the "new normal" of participation in contemporary democracies. At the beginning of the 2000s, Kitschelt (2003: 89) emphasized that the differentiation of channels of interest intermediation is the "big story of the last third of the twentieth century in European democracies." However, a decade after the Great Recession—marked by events such as the so-called refugee crisis, Brexit, and the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic—it is to be seen whether we are not witnessing the normalization of crisis politics and a period of de-differentiation of interest intermediation. Ultimately, political organizations and individual participants should be ever more likely to bridge electoral and nonelectoral participation in such a context.

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PART V

CONTEXTS

CHAPTER 28

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CLEAVAGES AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

MARTIN DOLEZAL

In times of rapid political change, the very concept of "cleavage" and its inherent focus on both deep and lasting societal divisions that structure political conflict seems to be rather outdated. What is more, after decades of research and numberless publications, scholars still have not reached a common understanding of the phenomenon. "Social cleavages," to decipher the title of this chapter, refer to attitudinal or behavioral differences between groups that are traditionally defined by their social class or religious belonging but in more recent decades also by their gender, education, or age (e.g., Ford and Jennings 2020). "Political cleavages," by contrast, refer to stable divisions in politics, often in a historical perspective following Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) model and typically with a focus on parties as mobilizing political actors. Using such a dual approach it is feasible to distinguish between a "bottom-up" perspective focussing on social and a "top-down" perspective focussing on political cleavages (Evans and Northmore-Ball 2018). However, the still most elaborated conceptualization of cleavage theory developed by Bartolini and Mair (1990) criticizes this very distinction and proposes an integrated model instead. As a response to Bartolini and Mair's unified and therefore demanding conceptualization, Deegan-Krause (2007, 2013) suggests distinguishing between "full" and "partial" cleavages as an alternative.

Despite these severe conceptual problems in the understanding of the phenomenon, numerous studies have explored the role of cleavages for the configuration of party systems following Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) seminal contribution. Authors have analyzed the formation and transformation of cleavages in both established and new democracies (e.g., Bornschier 2009, 2018; Enyedi 2008; Ford and Jennings 2020; Whitefield 2002) with an increasing focus on the role of agency by political parties (e.g., Enyedi 2005; Evans and De Graaf 2013). Another major strand of literature has explored the role of cleavages, most prominently of the class cleavage, for party choice (e.g., Evans 1999; Knutsen 2006). Whether cleavages are relevant to explain voters' decision to take part in elections at all or to participate in other modes has been less often explored though.

Research on political participation has used the cleavage concept in two broad, often interconnected, ways: the most fundamental question in this perspective refers to demographic differences in political participation and therefore follows the concept of social cleavages. When the focus is on social class or related factors such as education, this research perspective, at least in practice, is often very close to concepts such as people's socioeconomic status (SES) or the more elaborated resource model of participation (Brady et al. 1995). Social characteristics are identified as causal factors on the individual level, but whether those who share these characteristics also regard themselves as belonging to a distinct social group, which is a defining characteristic at least of "full" cleavages, typically remains an open question. A macro perspective, by contrast, interprets cleavages—or perhaps "political cleavages"—as contextual factors that influence the behavior of collective actors such as parties or social movements (Kriesi et al. 1995) but also of individual citizens (Verba et al. 1978). Research on electoral participation had integrated this aspect in earlier studies, whereas in recent decades cleavages defined as a contextual factor have mostly been neglected.

This chapter discusses the role of cleavages for political participation in three steps: first, it summarizes the conceptual debate on the very concept of cleavage and provides a short overview of old and new cleavages identified by scholars. Second, the chapter reviews the literature that links cleavages with participation in general and with electoral and partisan modes on the one hand and non-electoral modes on the other. Third, the chapter provides an exploratory empirical assessment of the role of cleavages for current patterns of participation throughout Europe.

Defining the Concept

Since the 1980s, reports of the death of cleavage politics have been delivered numerous times. Nevertheless, the "search for deep structures" (Enyedi 2005: 697) influencing political behavior has remained central to political scientists who follow sociological and historical perspectives. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) explained the structure of political competition in Western Europe as a result of long-term developments triggered by both the formation of the modern nation-state, called the "national revolution," and the Industrial Revolution. The former generated the state–church and center–periphery cleavages, the latter resulted in the urban–rural and owner–worker (class) cleavages. Party systems and political conflict in general, Lipset and Rokkan argued in the 1960s, are still structured by antagonisms that originated before the introduction of mass suffrage and were fully politicized already in the 1920s. This stabilizing force of cleavages has become known as the "freezing hypothesis."

Lipset and Rokkan's comprehensive historical analysis paved the way for exploring the development of party systems and especially of their stability, but researchers used this concept also for phenomena on the micro level, above all for party choice. Given the original focus on long-term developments and strategic decisions of political elites, researchers used the cleavage concept often in an imprecise way and frequently as a sophisticated synonym for sociodemographic differences (social cleavage) or enduring conflicts (political cleavage) only. This deficient application of the theoretically elaborated model was already criticized in the 1970s (e.g., Zuckerman 1975), but it was Bartolini and Mair (1990; see also Bartolini 2005) who finally defined a kind of "gold standard" of cleavage theory. Based on their study of the class cleavage, Bartolini and Mair vehemently argued for using the concept only if three basic cleavage elements exist:

> an *empirical* element, which identifies the empirical referent of the concept, and which we can define in social-structural terms; a *normative* element, that is the set of values and beliefs which provides a sense of identity and role to the empirical element, and which reflect the self-consciousness of the social group(s) involved; and an *organisational/behavioural* element, that is the set of individual interactions, institutions, and organisations, such as political parties, which develop as part of the cleavage. (Bartolini and Mair 1990: 215)

These authors thus rejected any kind of differentiation into social (empirical element) and political cleavages (organizational/behavioral element), and they additionally stressed the role of identity as well as the feeling of group membership as an integral part of the normative element. Such a strict and demanding definition is superior to vague and ambiguous concepts. But scholars following Bartolini and Mair (1990) have had difficulties integrating the phenomena they study in this elaborated schema. The "applicability of the concept" (Enyedi 2008: 288) proved to be a challenge.

As a response to this dilemma, Deegan-Krause (2007, 2013) proposed to distinguish between "full" and "partial" cleavages based on the number of existing cleavage elements as defined by Bartolini and Mair (1990). More specifically, he suggested differentiating "difference" (one cleavage element), "divide" (two elements), and "full cleavage" (all three elements). Regarding the intermediate category, a divide based on structure and attitudes (called position divide) resembles "the alignment of structural and attitudinal difference without an accompanying political alignment" (Deegan-Krause 2007: 539). Structure plus institution, the second possible divide (census divide), he defined as an "alignment of group identity and political choice without attitudinal trappings" (2007: 539). Attitudes plus institutions (issue divide), finally, are an "interplay between attitude and partisanship" (2007: 540) without a strong structural element. While this proposed terminology might reduce the ambiguity in the research literature, it has so far been hardly used. Deegan-Krause's categories are also less easy to apply when the focus is not on party choice but on political participation in general.

In addition to the relative salience of the three cleavage dimensions and their specific interaction, the importance of agency for cleavage (trans-)formation has occupied many researchers. Already Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 207) had stressed that cleavage-based oppositions do not develop automatically but must be organized, a fact that Sartori, a harsh critic of all sociological or determinist approaches, praised as a "landmark" (1969: 207). In recent years the structure vs. agency debate has shifted once again to the latter side, with researchers increasingly stressing the role of political elites (Enyedi 2005: 699). Nowadays, scholars of party politics in particular emphasize strategic factors and the role of political entrepreneurs when studying political change (e.g., De Vries and Hobolt 2020). The structural basis of politics, by contrast, tends to be neglected.

Old and New Cleavages

Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) four canonical oppositions still define the reference point for any contemporary cleavage analysis as they proved to be "highly adaptable" (Deegan-Krause

2007: 541) also for new contexts outside the authors' original focus on northwestern Europe. The importance of cleavages for (electoral) politics has been studied with great effort but the results regarding the contemporary relevance or sheer existence of cleavages strongly differ. In his discussion of the state of research, Kriesi (1998: 166) identified three broad approaches in the literature: One group of authors, especially those who are interested in the politics of social class, still follow the freezing hypothesis and therefore emphasize aspects of continuity (e.g., Bartolini and Mair 1990); a second group stresses the declining relevance of social class and all other cleavages (e.g., Franklin et al. 1992); whereas a third group shares the impression of a declining relevance of traditional cleavages but identifies new cleavages instead (e.g., Kriesi et al. 2008).

Those who defend the significance of traditional cleavages such as class or religion have often stressed the necessity of responding to a changing social and political environment by abandoning above all classic Marxist dichotomies such as owners vs. workers (e.g., Evans 1999). Fine-grained categorizations based on the nature of employment relations and especially of different work logics (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Oesch 2006a, 2006b) revealed the existence of still significant class differences that also shape attitudes (Kitschelt and Rehm 2014). New divisions within the middle class, in particular, have therefore become a prominent research topic (e.g., Güveli et al. 2007). In addition, the use of more sophisticated statistical techniques demonstrated that declining values of the traditional Alford-Index (Alford 1962) do not necessarily indicate the death of social class (e.g., Evans 1999). Moreover, studies of voting behavior have shown that religious differences (state–church cleavage) are still relevant even though they are often embedded in a broader cultural dimension, defined by differences based on religious and non-religious values (De Koster and Van der Waal 2007). The two remaining traditional cleavages have been studied less often even though the center–periphery cleavage still structures politics in countries such as Spain or the UK (Keating 2008). More recent studies have also renewed the interest in the urban–rural cleavage as many authors highlight increasing differences between cosmopolitan cities and parochial, traditionalist rural areas (see Ford and Jennings 2020: 307–308).

Leaving aside the second group identified by Kriesi (1998), the anti-cleavage formation (e.g., Franklin et al. 1992), numerous studies have asked whether long-term developments such as individualization, secularization, and globalization call existing cleavage structures into question but have at the same time the potential to define new structural oppositions (e.g., Bornschier 2009; Enyedi 2008; Ford and Jennings 2020). While even populism has already been interpreted as a "fifth" cleavage (Barbieri 2021), only a "few serious claimants" (Deegan-Krause 2007: 541) for the development of new cleavages take a prominent place in the research literature:

The materialism–post-materialism cleavage (Inglehart 1977) is a conflict between generations over fundamental political values. Many authors interpret this cleavage and related concepts such as the liberty–authority value cleavage (Flanagan and Lee 2003) as the basis for the development of new social movements in the 1970s and the subsequent rise of Green parties. In addition to generational differences based on socialization, education above all has been identified as the structural basis of these value conflicts (Stubager 2010).

Another prominent cleavage identified by scholars is the conflict between the winners and losers of globalization, which has accelerated since the 1980s. Kriesi and his colleagues have analyzed this cleavage, especially in the electoral arena (Bornschier 2018; Kriesi et al. 2006, 2008, 2012) but also in the protest arena (Hutter 2014). In addition to the more general cleavage based on globalization processes, many authors have explored whether European integration has resulted in a European or transnational cleavage (De Wilde et al. 2018; Fuchs et al. 2009; Hooghe and Marks 2018; Marks et al. 2021). The latter studies, however, typically focus on parties' programs and voters' attitudes only. Europe, thus, rather resembles a "partial cleavage" when using Deegan-Krause's (2007, 2013) terminology discussed earlier, as not all cleavage elements play a relevant role.

Gender differences in party choice and political participation in general have also been analyzed from a (social) cleavage perspective. The research literature on the (new) gender gap in voting behavior has grown enormously (e.g., Inglehart and Norris 2000), but gender differences are also visible when comparing different modes of participation as men and women engage differently (e.g., Coffé and Bolzendahl 2010). In addition, migration and the increasing ethnic diversity of European societies as its consequence have been identified as new structural antagonisms (see Ford and Jennings 2020: 302–304).

Cleavages and Political Participation

The general debate on the role of cleavages has also influenced research on political participation. In this research area, scholars have used cleavage theory in two ways. In a bottom-up perspective, following the already-mentioned concept of social cleavages, the literature has explored the impact of social characteristics on individual citizens' willingness and ability to participate—either in general or with respect to specific modes. Cleavages understood as a contextual feature, by contrast, have been used to explain different levels of participation between countries or over time. In terms of individual behavior, the bulk of cleavage-based studies has been explicitly focused on voting. Interpreting cleavages as a contextual factor, by contrast, has been mostly restricted to research on social movements and protest politics.

Starting with the earliest studies on turnout in elections and other modes of political participation, unequal engagement has been a central topic. Focussing on demographic, cleavage-related differences in participation, researchers typically found strong contrasts based on social class and education in the protest arena and in second-order elections characterized by lower turnout rates such as European elections, whereas national elections proved to be less affected by this problem (e.g., Dolezal and Hutter 2012). But cleavage theory might also explain country differences in the levels of inequality. In their classic study on equality and political participation, Verba et al. (1978) explicitly incorporated a cleavage perspective on the macro level to account for country differences:

> The nature of cleavage in a society and the extent to which that cleavage is reflected in the institutional structures of the society affect the processes by which individuals and groups are mobilized to political activity. [. . .] [P]olitical conflict, particularly that structured by the party and organizational systems of a society, can result in increased participatory equality across social strata." (Verba et al. 1978: 157)

Subsequent research, however, has rarely used such an approach. If contextual factors were analyzed to explain the level of participation, researchers mostly focussed on aspects such as political institutions, the socioeconomic development, and a country's democratic legacy (Teorell et al. 2007a, 2007b). In addition, associational involvement and mobilizing elites have been explored in this context (Armingeon 2007; Leighley 1996; Leighley and Nagler 2007). Earlier studies had already identified group consciousness as an explanation for why certain groups participated more than one would have expected based on their resources (Miller et al. 1981; Olsen 1970). This factor is also included in the civic voluntarism model (Verba et al. 1995), but a genuine cleavage perspective has been rarely used in this type of research.

Modes of Participation

Whether and how cleavages, understood as social differences on the micro—or as contextual factors on the macro level, specifically influence various modes of participation has been studied with varying degrees. This section provides a short overview based on different modes of participation. First, it sums up research on electoral and partisan participation, then it looks at non-electoral modes.

Electoral and Partisan Participation

Whereas the impact of social class and to a lesser extent of religion and other (social) cleavages on party choice has produced an immense amount of literature, the more basic question of who takes part in elections has been less often analyzed in this perspective. In a recent handbook on elections, voting behavior, and public opinion, the reason for this lack of research was (indirectly) provided: “By and large, class effects on turnout tend to be modest in size in the United States and minimal in Europe” (Plutzer 2018: 75). Later in the very same volume, however, a different assessment was presented: “Arguably an important growing class cleavage therefore is between voting or not voting” (Evans and Northmore-Ball 2018: 127). Research on unequal participation in elections (Lijphart 1997) has indeed become more important in recent years as declining turnout does not affect all groups of voters similarly. A class cleavage in turnout has been identified, amongst others, in the UK (Heath 2018) and, to a lesser extent, in Switzerland (Rennwald 2014). Authors using a social-cleavage perspective to explain party choice have therefore started to include the basic question of participation as well (e.g., Goldberg 2019).

Considering the contextual interpretation, most of the classic studies and authoritative overviews of research based on aggregated data do not address cleavages or related concepts (Blais 2006, 2007; Blais and Dobrzynska 1998; Cancela and Geys 2016; Geys 2006; Jackman 1987; Jackman and Miller 1995; Vowles 2018). In contrast, the very first systematic study of turnout differences between countries did so. Powell (1986) used a “Party-Group linkage index” and expected “voter turnout to be higher in countries having sharper partisan-group differentials in support” (1986: 22). This approach was deliberately abandoned by subsequent researchers who saw no systematic effect of this variable (Blais 2006: 112, 118; Jackman 1987: 414). Whereas Powell (1986) was interested in country differences, Gray and Caul (2000) focussed on declining group mobilization to explain change over time. Strong left organizations such as unions and labor parties, they argued, typically mobilize peripheral groups, which also triggers a countermobilization effect from the right: “At the aggregate level, we expect that (…) the strength of parties, unions, and other organizations, which have traditionally encouraged peripheral voters to go to the polls, will be positively associated with voter turnout" (1100). In his overview of research into turnout, Blais (2007: 630) acknowledged the factors identified by Gray and Caul (2000), but argued that they have little explanatory power.

The literature on party members typically focuses on their sociodemographic profile only and thus follows the concept of social cleavages. In the era of mass parties , social democratic parties "worked especially hard to enlist working-class members" (Heidar 2006: 305) not least for reasons of legitimacy even though their leaders often came from other strata. In his study of party members in 15 West European countries around 1990, Widfeldt (1995: 155) found that workers were indeed less, or even not at all, underrepresented in social democratic parties. In general, however, he found party members' "social representativeness" as being reduced by a male predominance, an underrepresentation of younger cohorts, an underrepresentation of lower classes, and an overrepresentation of higher educational levels. Twelve years later, Scarrow (2007: 642) summed up contemporary research quite similarly as party members were found "to have above-average levels of education and income." Moreover, they were "more likely to be male than female [and] (t)hey tend to be older than the population average" (Scarrow 2007: 642).

Non-Electoral Modes of Participation

Compared to electoral and partisan modes, non-electoral modes of participation have been less often explored using cleavage theory. Research on civic engagement, for example, has been dominated by theories of social trust and social capital in particular (Putnam 2001).

The effects of cleavages on protest politics have been more often analyzed. Researchers using this perspective, however, have typically looked at social cleavages only. Whereas earlier studies following breakdown and grievance approaches saw "unconventional" political participation as the domain of poor and uneducated people, research on new social movements since the 1970s has typically found that highly educated people of the (new) middle class dominate this mode of participation (Barnes and Kaase 1979; van Aelst and Walgrave 2001). Protest politics thus "speaks with a highly educated and upper-class accent" (Dolezal and Hutter 2012: 85). Marien et al. (2010) therefore argued that non-institutionalized forms of participation might increase patterns of inequality based on education. But at the same time, these authors stressed, non-electoral modes strongly reduce or even reverse inequalities based on gender and age which are prevalent in other modes.

Like studies on turnout, the impact of cleavages as a contextual characteristic influencing participation in protests has been rarely explored. In one of the first studies using a multilevel model to explain differences in protest behavior, Dalton et al. (2010) only included the openness of the political system as well as the overall socioeconomic development of countries as macro factors. In their study of social movements, by contrast, Kriesi et al. (1995) regarded cleavages as part of the political opportunity structure (see Kriesi 2004). In this perspective, these authors saw "a zero-sum relationship between the strength of traditional political cleavages and the possibility of new social movements to articulate a new societal cleavage" (1995: 4). New social movements should thus flourish in countries where the class cleavage or other traditional divisions have lost their power to structure political conflict. In their comparison of protest politics in seven European countries, Giugni and

Grasso (2019) followed a similar reasoning (see also Hutter 2014). Eggert and Giugni (2015), by contrast, were interested in the demographic composition of protesters and focussed on the mobilizing potential of the traditional class cleavage. Workers, they found, are more present in street demonstrations where this cleavage is strong.

Despite its historical role in the fight against slavery or South Africa's apartheid regime, political consumerism has been included in research on participation only recently (Boström et al. 2019). Traditional social cleavages have been rarely addressed in this context but given existing patterns in the division of labor between men and women, political consumerism has been analyzed with a gender perspective. Political consumerism, Stolle et al. (2005: 263) argued, might be "considered as a more woman-friendly way of participating in political life." This mode of participation as well as "private activism" (Coffé and Bolzendahl 2010: 330) in general is easier to incorporate into one's daily life.

Studies on online participation, finally, above all stressed the divide between digital natives and digital immigrants (Prensky 2001a, 2001b). The sheer spread of access and knowledge has contributed to a decrease of this divide in recent years, but age remains an important factor to explain online activism, with younger cohorts still being more active. Differences based on gender or social class have become less important (Oser et al. 2013: 98).

Comparing Modes of Political Participation

To complement the review of extant research, this section explores the current influence of social characteristics as well as values related to old and new cleavages on various modes of participation. In a second step of the analysis, the potential impact of the class cleavage, now defined as a contextual characteristic, on turnout and protest participation of production workers will be explored. The following analyses are based on the most recent ninth round (third edition) of the European Social Survey (ESS), with interviews held in 29 countries in (mostly) 2018 and 2019.

The ESS differentiates between five modes of political participation: electoral (turnout in national elections), partisan (working for a party or action group), protest (taking part in legal demonstrations), consumerism (boycotting certain products), and online (posting or sharing anything about politics online). In addition, an additive index of participation based on the sum of activities will be used as a dependent variable. While electoral participation refers to the most recent national election, all other forms cover respondents' activities during the last twelve months.

Age, gender, and education (differentiated in primary, secondary, and tertiary levels) primarily serve as controls even though—as mentioned—their cleavage potential has been debated in the literature. The traditional divides, by contrast, comprise place of residence (urban–rural with three categories), class, and religion.

The class cleavage is based on respondents' (former) occupation for which I use the highly elaborated scheme developed by Oesch (2006a, 2006b).[1] In the version with eight classes, which he recommends for analyses of political participation, Oesch distinguishes between the following groups: self-employed professionals and large employers (Class I), small business owners (II), technical (semi-)professionals (III), production workers (IV), (associate) managers (V), clerks (VI), sociocultural (semi-)professionals (VII), and service workers (VIII). This classification captures both a hierarchical dimension and different work logics. If no information is available or respondents are not part of the (former) workforce, their partner's (former) class position is used instead.

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[1] https://people.unil.ch/danieloesch/scripts/.

The religious cleavage is operationalized by respondents' behavior instead of their not always relevant membership. I, therefore, compare respondents who attend a religious service (apart from special occasions such as weddings or funerals) every week—and thus follow the requirements of all major monotheistic religions—with those who attend less often and with those who never attend. Living in an increasingly secular environment, attending religious services not only expresses religious belief, it also leads to interaction with like-minded people, and thus increases the psychological aspect of group membership. A religious–secular interpretation of the religious cleavage is also easier to analyze than an interpretation based on differences between religious groups, as the latter vary between the countries.

To account for Europe's changing demographic profile due to migration, I also include a dummy variable capturing respondents' migration background. Migrants, irrespective of their (current) citizenship, are defined as being born abroad or having at least one parent born abroad. The share of migrants, defined in this way, ranges from 1.6 percent in Bulgaria to no less than 45.1 percent in Switzerland (average: 17.6 percent).

To capture the value basis of cleavages, I include both the economic left–right and the liberty–authority divide into the equation. Both are operationalized with two deliberately general measures, each to avoid potential biases when using too specific policy attitudes (e.g., rights of LGBT) or too broad measures such as the (general) left–right scale that might be understood differently. Economic left–right values are measured with an additive index using the following statements: "A society is fair when income and wealth are equally distributed among all people" (ESS variable *sofrdst*) and "A society is fair when it takes care of those who are poor and in need regardless of what they give back to society" (*sofrpr*). The liberty–authority divide is operationalized with the following items: "Important to do what is told and follow rules" (*ipfrule*) and "Important to follow traditions and customs" (*imptrad*). Both variables are re-coded into five-point scales, with higher scores indicating economically right-wing and culturally authoritarian values, respectively. Table 28.1 reports the results of logistic regressions for the individual modes of participation and, in the last column, of a linear regression for the additive index.

Summing up the results, it seems that varying rates of participation based on respondents' ages are indeed, as argued by Marien et al. (2010), balanced out when comparing different modes (especially electoral vs. online participation). This is hardly the case with gender differences as they are in general much stronger than expected. A closer look at the data (not shown in the table) reveals that the gender gap in Eastern Europe is stronger than in Western Europe but—except for political consumerism in Western Europe—women are nevertheless always significantly less involved. While the impact of higher education differs in size but not in direction, the urban–rural divide has different consequences when comparing old/institutionalized and new/non-institutionalized forms of participation. People living in large towns are less likely to go to the polls or work in a party but are more likely to protest or engage in political consumption and online participation than their compatriots living in rural areas. A similar picture emerges for the religious cleavage. Class differences are huge,

Table 28.1 Modes of Political Participation (Logistic and Linear Regressions)

	Electoral[1]	Partisan	Protest	Consumer	Online	Index[2]
Age	0.03***	0.00**	−0.01***	−0.00**	−0.03***	0.00***
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female	−0.16***	−0.54***	−0.18***	0.05	−0.17***	−0.06***
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.01)
Education (Ref=primary)						
• secondary	0.42***	0.37***	0.39***	0.45***	0.37***	0.21***
	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.01)
• tertiary	0.86***	0.82***	0.66***	0.76***	0.60***	0.42***
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.01)
Urban (Ref=low)						
• middle	−0.06	−0.05	0.27***	0.04	0.09*	0.01
	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.01)
• high	−0.15***	−0.20**	0.57***	0.23***	0.24***	0.07***
	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.01)
Class (Ref=Class VI)						
• Class I	0.17	0.35*	0.14	0.26**	0.57***	0.19***
	(0.12)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.03)
• Class II	−0.14*	0.06	0.02	0.21***	0.24***	0.05**
	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.02)
• Class III	0.08	−0.32**	−0.04	0.12*	0.08	0.04
	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.02)
• Class IV	−0.42***	−0.45***	−0.13	−0.28***	−0.18**	−0.11***
	(0.05)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.02)
• Class V	0.27***	0.14	0.10	0.22***	0.27***	0.12***
	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.02)
• Class VII	0.17**	0.10	0.48***	0.34***	0.39***	0.18***
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.02)
• Class VIII	−0.34***	−0.28**	−0.04	−0.08	0.00	−0.07***
	(0.05)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.02)
Religiosity (Ref=low)						
• middle	0.35***	0.35***	−0.01	−0.06	−0.04	0.03**
	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.01)
• high	0.43***	0.59***	−0.11	−0.18**	−0.22***	0.02
	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.02)
Migration background	−0.79***	−0.26***	0.08	−0.15***	−0.01	−0.26***
	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.01)
Economic Left-Right	0.01	−0.16***	−0.31***	−0.06**	−0.08***	−0.05***

Continued

Table 28.1 Continued

	Electoral[1]	Partisan	Protest	Consumer	Online	Index[2]
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Liberty-Authority	0.11***	−0.14***	−0.26***	−0.22***	−0.19***	−0.07***
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Pseudo R² / R²	0.19	0.09	0.11	0.22	0.15	0.16
(N)	(39,868)	(42,512)	(42,502)	(42,424)	(42,447)	(41,700)

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$
Country dummies are included.
Data: European Social Survey, round 9 (3rd edition).
Notes: [1]Excluding respondents who are not eligible to vote; [2]Including respondents who are not eligible to vote.
Independent variables: age (*agea*), female (*gndr*), education (*eisced*), urban (*domicil*), class (*isco08*, *emplrel*, *emplno*, *isco08p*, *emprelp*) [categories I to VIII: see main text], religiosity (*rlgatnd*), migration background (*brncntr*, *facntr*, *mocntr*), economic left–right (*sofrdst*, *sofrpr*), liberty–authority (*ipfrule*, *imptrad*), union [used for additional analyses] (*mbtru*); dependent variables [modes of political participation]: electoral (*vote*), partisan (*wrkprty*), protest (*pbldmn*), consumer (*bctprd*), online (*pstplonl*). Data are weighted (*dweight*).

with two groups being typically less involved: production workers (Class IV) and service workers (Class VIII). Production workers are the most underrepresented group in the active electorate. Apart from protest, they are also significantly less likely to participate in all other modes. Union membership (not shown in the table) in general increases respondents' propensity to participate. An interaction with the two less involved social classes partly changes the sign of the coefficients but in general they become insignificant, which indicates the mobilizing power of unions. Sociocultural professionals (Class VII) who form the backbone of new social movements as well as green parties (Dolezal 2010) are the most active group in almost all modes of participation. Having a migration background, by contrast, significantly reduces all kinds of political involvement—except for protests and online participation. Different value positions, finally, are associated with different levels of participation as well. Both economic and cultural right-wing orientations are expressed by people who participate less. The exception is voting: economic orientations do not differ between active and passive respondents, whereas authoritarian values are associated with an even higher propensity to vote.

From a social cleavage perspective, class differences are thus still associated with different levels of participation throughout Europe. Does the national context, more concretely, the strength of the class cleavage moderate this association? Figure 28.1 uses union density as a measure for the strength of the class cleavage and relates this contextual factor to participation rates of production workers in elections (left) and protests (right). To account for country variations in turnout and protest, the participation rates are calculated as percentage point differences to countries' average values based on all respondents whose class position is known.

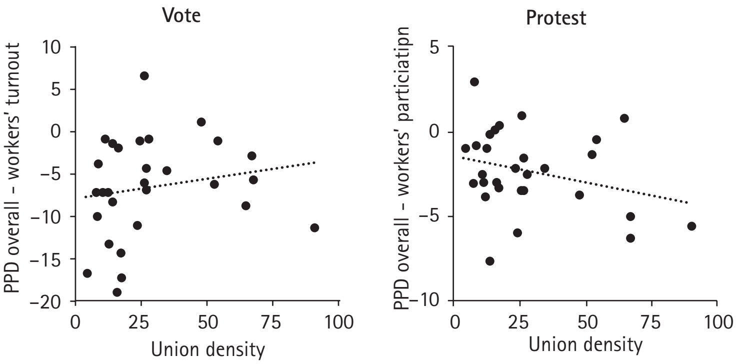

FIGURE 28.1 Union Density and Participation of Production Workers: Elections and Protests

Sources: Union density (ILO) (ilostat.ilo.org/topics/union-membership/, last access 22/5/2021), participation by social class (ESS; see Table 28.1).

The scatter plot on the left indicates that in countries with stronger unions, the inequality of participation in turnout tends to be smaller. Given the spread of the country cases, this association is, however, rather weak (0.17). For protests, by contrast, the association is even negative (-0.28), but it is difficult to interpret this result as strong unions might also reduce the necessity to use the protest arena for wage bargaining. Contrary to the study by Eggert and Giugni (2015) which has already been mentioned, the ESS survey data do not show the thematic scope of protests. Nevertheless, whereas social cleavages—as reported in Table 28.1—do explain different rates of participation, the role of cleavages as a contextual factor is less easy to demonstrate.

CONCLUSION

More than 50 years after the publication of Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) famous introductory chapter, political science as well as neighboring disciplines still regard cleavages as a central concept for understanding contemporary politics. Despite the ongoing debate on the very definition of the concept, the role of cleavages has also been frequently considered in studies of political participation. The present chapter has identified some of the most important contributions in the general study of this phenomenon and has reviewed the research literature on the impact of cleavages on participation. Future research might consider conceptual aspects of cleavage theory, continue exploring the impact of old and new social cleavages on various modes of political participation, and revisit the effect of cleavages understood as a contextual factor.

From a conceptual perspective, further efforts to develop a common understanding and terminology of cleavages and related phenomena are certainly needed. Deegan-Krause's (2007, 2013) categories of "full" and "partial" cleavages, as well as his proposed terminology distinguishing between "difference" (based on only one out of three cleavage elements) and "divide" (two elements) are one possible avenue of research. Scholars who explore "full" cleavages or follow an integrated understanding of cleavages in any case (Bartolini and Mair 1990) should pay more attention to the question of group consciousness, the black box of most contemporary research. Stubager's (2009) analysis of Denmark, for example, demonstrated that members of education groups have formed a group identity that is related to the conflict between libertarian and authoritarian values. In a similar perspective, Bornschier et al. (2021) recently explored how the "universalism–particularism divide" has been transformed into a genuine cleavage in Switzerland.

Regarding the impact of social cleavages on participation, studies of the class cleavage have benefitted from sophisticated classifications of occupations (e.g., Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992; Oesch 2006a, 2006b). Production and service workers on the one and sociocultural professionals on the other side exhibit strong differences in levels of participation—as could be shown also in the earlier exploratory empirical analysis. Class will thus remain a central concept in research even though new developments such as the educational expansion, mass migration, the aging of societies, and the geographical polarization of populations (Ford and Jennings 2020) will shape future studies at least as strongly.

Research concerning the impact of cleavages might also address again their role as a genuine contextual factor on the macro level. In recent years, above all students of protest politics have incorporated this aspect in their analyses. Both the strength of specific social movements (Hutter 2014; Kriesi et al. 1995) and the level of involvement of specific social groups in the protest arena (Eggert and Giugni 2015) have been explained accordingly. Students of turnout, who have mostly abandoned this factor from their analyses after Powell's (1986) original contribution, might re-think the role of cleavages, given declining rates of turnout in most established and new democracies.

Extant research using social and political concepts of cleavage has also demonstrated that a closer look at different modes of participation reveals both differences and similarities. Students of voting behavior might combine their interest in party choice with the preceding decision to participate. But modes of "unconventional" participation are worth disentangling too, as the normalization of protest (van Aelst and Walgrave 2001) does not affect all forms of protest politics similarly (Torcal et al. 2016). Social and political characteristics are still important factors distinguishing active and passive citizens. Whether such differences are the result of short-term influences, or the expression of old and new cleavages will therefore remain on social scientists' to-do list.

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CHAPTER 29

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

MANLIO CINALLI

THE variation of institutions and the political context is a recurrent element in comparative analyses. Take the difficult time of pandemic emergency that the whole world is going through at the time of writing. Everywhere political institutions are attempting to counter the dramatic impact of the virus SARS-CoV-2: yet the variation between institutions and their policies can be huge, even within a relatively homogeneous space such as Europe. Suffice it to remind ourselves that we have seen strict enforcement of full lockdown in some countries, while others have especially opted for softer forms of moral persuasion: this difference has taken place within overall political structures, for example in terms of parliamentary or presidential institutions, that may better suit one type of policymaking or the other. Since institutions and the political context provide the coordinates by which actors of different kind mobilize—whether in favor or against them—from this there follows some continuing political reconfigurations. In the same vein, contention around variations of institutions and the political context has been noticeable on the occasion of any major challenge shaking contemporary democracies, such as economic crises, migration crises, environmental crises and so forth. In fact, on the occasion of any major public grievance, the recurrent "crisis" narrative has often uncovered a call centered around institutions and the political context itself.

This chapter engages with the notions of institutions and the political context with a view to retracing long-term scholarly developments in studies of political participation. However, the main aim goes beyond a simple review of these developments; rather, the chapter furthers a new reading of the relationship between institutions and the political context on the one hand and political participation on the other. Over half a century ago, Olson's "logic of collective action" (1965) opened the way to numerous generations of scholars interested in explaining the emergence and variations of political mobilization: among these earliest explanations, there were studies being conducted on political opportunities and constraints for protest (Eisinger 1973). This chapter shows that explanations based on institutions and the political context have progressively extended, thereby crisscrossing the traditional concern of sociology with human agency and the privileged focus on institutions and politics within political science. Mutual synergies across sociology and political science have also nurtured research based on a more comprehensive notion of political participation. Being at its origins operationalized through a protest-centric approach focussed on the emergence of the national state (Tilly 1964, 1978, 1986), the notion of political mobilization has been extended so as to include strategic "claims" (Koopmans and Statham 1999), later progressing into a broader research agenda that also deals with electoral behavior challenging governors (Levin et al. 2015, Giugni and Grasso 2019), and voting by citizens at large and groups at the margins (Giugni et al. 2020; Cinalli and Giugni 2016a).

Furthermore, the chapter shows that traditional interest-politics in the neo-liberal camp as well as traditional conflict-politics in the neo-Marxist camp are today losing their dominant grip on explanations of different forms of political participation; in particular, explanations based on institutions and the political context have weakened the unrealistic assumption that both neo-liberals and neo-Marxists share in a common idea of human agency as a realm within which actors compete for their own particular advantage and with no consideration of others' interests and demands. Far from being atomized individuals acting on their own behalf, people behave through political participation as inventors of new thoughts and actions within their environments (Joas 1993); in so doing, their behaviors can be taken within broader nested systems that are made of temporal perspectives and intersubjective processes (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Lukes 1973. Political participation can thus influence the reshaping of schemas, habits, and the political context itself (Emirbayer and Mische 1998).

Overall, then, the analysis of institutions and the political context provides a chance to look more closely into the cross-fertilization of different perspectives and developments across the social sciences. Scholarly studies over the impact of institutions and the political context have become extremely comprehensive (see, for reviews, Kriesi 2004; Meyer 2004). Having walked on a long road leading from a static to a dynamic approach—as well as ranging from national to local and from structural to cultural—these studies have developed high levels of sophistication in their articulation of institutions and the political context on the one hand with, on the other, different forms of political participation. Definitions of these latter have also undergone regular expansion, ranging from highly visible instances of collective action to individual forms of political participation at the micro level (Cinalli and Giugni 2011; Grasso and Giugni 2016), including individual voting (Franklin et al. 1996; Kriesi 2014). In the longer run, these studies have opened space for the next challenge: moving from a traditional view of political participation as a zero-sum game for the prevailing of the strongest interest (whether this be by an individual, a social class, a nation, etc.), to post-contentious forms of political participation that assume a normative rethinking of institutions and the political context (Cinalli and Jacobson 2020).

The Long March of "Political Opportunity Structure" toward an All-Encompassing Framework

Early theorizations of institutions and the political context moved their first steps in line with traditional theories of human agency embedded either in (neo)liberal interest-politics or alternatively in (neo)Marxist conflict-politics. In particular, in the late 1960s the increasing focus on the "free-rider problem" put emphasis on the rationality of individuals' choices, with its consequent limits for the "logic of collective action" (Olson 1965). Against this hyper-liberal thesis—which reinforced the idea that "collective behaviorism" is produced by a spontaneous and irrational dealignment with structures within society (Smelser 1962)—grievance-based research stood up to claim the relevance of (relative) deprivation in the endless conflict between haves and have-nots (Gurr 1970). In line with critical Marxism (Gramsci 1971), human agency was seen in its strong anti-systemic potential, based on a cognitive understanding of deprivation and injustice from comparing one's economic conditions with others. These early theorizations pushed scholars to focus especially on social structures and organization for explaining the emergence of protest, with very little room open for studying other forms of political participation as well as institutions and political structures. Analysis of these latter, in any case, was unlikely in the individual-based approach of liberals, or simply undesirable for Marxists who simplistically considered institutions and the political context to be ephemeral "superstructures" (Burawoy and Wright 2001; Stone 1985).

However, interest-based and conflict-based theories came gradually closer in a shared epistemological background for the study of institutions and the political context. Suffice it to say that seminal studies engaging in full with context-sensitive variables (Eisinger 1973; Tilly 1978) focussed on strong conflictual instances by putting the opposition between "challengers" and "insiders" at the core of their accounts. This treatment of conflict between challengers and insiders has served quite well the purpose of building up high levels of sophistication in the analysis of institutions and the political context, leading soon to most accomplished scholarly works of contentious politics (Kriesi et al. 1995; McAdam 1986; Tarrow 1989). Yet scholarly engagement with the notion of "political opportunity structure" mostly referred to general country-level characteristics: the extensive recourse to collective forms of mobilization between the 1960s and the 1990s was thus explained by a static and distant notion of institutions and the political context (McAdam 1986). The latter were coterminous with the long-term structuration of each national state, affecting unilaterally mobilization. Emphasis on institutions and the political context came thus to corroborate a broader scholarly interest in country-level comparison, whether this interest was grounded in "neo-institutionalism," nationalism, welfare approaches, and so forth (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Gellner 1983; Dyson 1980).

Naturally then, the most addressed dimensions became those that are more intrinsically linked to the core structure of the nation-state, such as the degree of openness in the institutionalized political system, the degree of stability in alignments among elites in power, the availability of these latter to sustain mobilization, or otherwise the capacity for repression (McAdam 1986). Nevertheless, seeds for alternative operationalizations existed since the earliest theorization of "opportunities," including a more dynamic component of "openings, weak spots, barriers and resources"(Eisinger 1973: 11–12).These seeds germinated in the elaboration of an approach that also put emphasis on the dynamic component of the political context: besides national traditions and institutional structure, the notion of "political opportunity structure" has thus included informal procedures and prevailing strategies with regard to challengers, determining "the set of strategic options available" for them (Kriesi et al. 1995). Scholarly research on institutions and the political context have finally converged into a "political process approach" (McAdam 1982), which in its renewed wording has signaled a stronger focus on dynamic processes for explaining diachronic trends of political opportunities, for example in terms of "alignments" and opening of "windows of opportunities" (Tarrow 1989). In the long run, this trend has brought in the more volatile aspects of the political context, including in particular variations of policymaking (Meyer 1990, 1993).

This broader convergence has also meant an increasing cross-fertilization with the "cultural approach." This label here refers to a federation of different perspectives that have focussed on new systems of values and "new social movements" (Touraine 1981; Melucci 1989) or, alternatively, on the role of processes of social construction. This latter focus has contributed to very influential discussions of "framing" processes (Snow et al. 1986; Gamson 1992), developing on the question of how social constructions can lead to mobilization (Gamson and Modigliani 1989; Eder 1993). The marriage between political process and the cultural approach has been crucial to introducing the idea that the political context also has a more informal, symbolic, and discursive side, in addition to the institutional side (McCammon 2013). For example, works on migration and ethnicity have argued that different institutions of citizenship impact upon the mobilization of migrants also through the type of discourse that is attached to each citizenship model (Giugni and Passy 2004; Koopmans et al. 2005). Scholars have thus engaged with combinations of institutions and discourse for explaining variations of mobilization over unemployment (Giugni 2010), Islam (Koopmans et al. 2005), environmental mobilization (Bröer and Duyvendak 2009) and youth (Kousis and Giugni 2020).

Furthermore, scholars have filled in the gap between analyses at the collective and individual level: this gradual extension could draw on a long-term agenda of research inquiring into the individual characteristics spurring political participation (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1978), including early explanations of "relative deprivation" (Gurr 1970). Scholars have thus addressed the impact of broader articulations of social and cultural variables side by side with institutions and the political context upon the decisions of individuals to engage in political participation (Anduiza 2002; Bühlmann and Freitag 2006; Franklin et al. 1996; Cinalli and Giugni 2011, Vrablikova 2014. As a result, research has become all-encompassing: it has dealt with both protest and conventional forms of participation at the collective and individual level, including analysis of electoral behavior (Cinalli and Giugni 2016a; Morales 2009); it has examined the impact of institutions and the political context on a large number of groups that have low levels of resources for sizable political participation in the public space, such as migrants (Cinalli and Giugni 2011), the unemployed (Cinalli and Giugni 2010), youth (Grasso and Giugni 2016) and the precarious more generally (Baglioni and Giugni 2014; Giugni et al. 2020). For example, the explanation of all forms of participation by migrants, including their electoral behavior at the local level, has overcome the more limited interest in their collective protests (Morales and Giugni 2011).

The "Field" Heuristics

A crucial development of the context-sensitive agenda for the study of both contentious and conventional participation has consisted in the increasing interest in "fields" of political participation (Cinalli 2004; Crossley 2003; Fligstein and McAdam 2012). This development has been meaningful both in theoretical and empirical terms. Scholars have retraced the complex boundaries within which real political engagement occurs, so as to discount more simplistic explanations based on the alleged natural laws of interest and conflict. After all, there can be little doubt that, beyond a first regulating layer that is common to all actors within the same country (for example, in terms of elites' alignments or capacity of the state for repression), institutions and the political context faced by some actors are in fact different from institutions and the political context faced by others, thereby demarcating different fields with different top-down opportunities. Accordingly, early theorization of "specific opportunities" (Giugni and Berclaz 2005) has gradually transformed into a comprehensive framework intersecting the analysis of more general political opportunities together with field-focused research. This framework has developed into an ever-burgeoning research on complex combinations of opportunities and constraints that policies and institutions manage for defining and regulating specific fields of politics (Chabanet and Giugni 2008).

Migration is among the earliest fields for which scholarly research has engaged in tracing the specific regulating contours of institutions and the political context: research has dealt with the translation of "citizenship regimes" (Giugni and Passy 2004; Koopmans et al. 2005) into specific political contexts for explaining political participation of both individuals (Cinalli and Giugni 2011) and organizations (Fennema 2004). Unemployment has provided another fertile ground for seminal research, specifying relevant institutions and policies—for example in terms of welfare and the labor market (Giugni et al. 2009)—for explaining political participation of the unemployed. Other fields of precarity have later come under scholarly scrutiny (Baglioni and Giugni 2014): ultimately, this expanding focus on an increasing number of fields has provided the ground on which research on institutions and the political context—whether in their structural or cultural concerns—has crystallized into a specific approach whereby agency-sensitive investigation can be embedded in context- and relational-sensitive explanation (Cinalli 2004 and 2007).

Research on specific fields have corroborated the articulation between the national and the local level (Della Porta and Andretta 2002; Harvey 2012; Lolive 1999). For example, scholars have considered that relevant institutions and policies for the life of migrants vary within the different territories of the same state (Cinalli and El Hariri 2010; Morales and Giugni 2011), since cities and metropolitan areas often face the most crucial challenges coming from increasing ethnic, cultural, and social diversity (Body-Gendrot and Martiniello 2000; Borkert and Caponio 2010). Another example is provided by the unemployment field: in this case, scholars have looked into specific opportunities that are grounded locally, for example in terms of channels that open up opportunities available in local government for local civil society (Baglioni and Giugni 2014). The analysis of fields of contention has also fed into further studies dealing with relational exchanges. For example, research has shown that both migrants and the unemployed have a stronger potential for both individual participation and collective mobilization when they are embedded in networks providing opportunities and constraints (Bassoli and Cinalli 2016, Klandermans et al. 2008).

At the same time, research on fields has also dealt with contemporary "crises." Take the long wave of mobilizations in the wake of the 2007 Great Recession: studies that have brought back in the relevance of institutions and the political context, dealing especially with austerity policies (Bermeo and Bartels 2014). Scholars have put emphasis on a broad set of factors referring to the role of political parties, electorates, and the diffusion of protest (Kriesi et al. 2020), as well as dealing with interactions between economic grievances, austerity measures, and the political context (Giugni and Grasso 2016). Analyses have become comprehensive, focussing on variable interactions between the way that the economic crisis has intertwined precarity and unemployment, hardening intergenerational conflict, loosening social bonding (Fraser 2015; Stiglitz 2015) and increasing the force of populist and extreme right stances vis-à-vis anti-austerity actors (Giugni and Grasso 2015; Kriesi and Pappas 2015).

These comprehensive analyses of "crisis" have matched similar research developments in a large number of other fields, including unemployment (Giugni et al. 2020), youth (Grasso 2016), and refugees (Sandu, 2020). Crucially, these studies have advanced an account that does not always fit the traditional model of politics as a contentious zero-sum game. Protests against austerity policies are not as widespread as common knowledge would suggest (Ancelovici et al. 2016), while notions of "crisis" vary across space and time according to strategic goals and national rhetoric (Cinalli and Giugni 2016b; Cinalli et al. 2021). Overall then, the specific focus on fields has transformed into a broader engagement with a large number of variables referring to actors and their networks, as well as their dynamic linking to institutions and the political context (beyond a simplistic assessment of a directed impact of the latter). Moreover, fields could embody the notion of "critical junctures" (Della Porta 2020a), by which innovation in terms of institutions and the political context becomes a realistic answer vis-à-vis growing political participation from below (Collier and Munck 2017).

The field heuristics can thus be invaluable for comprehending the multifarious combination of interactions and effects over any political issue, including fields where contention remains only an option that is never explored. As a consequence, the idea of political mobilization in its old-style notion of protest against institutions and social norms (Turner and Killian 1987; Turner 1996) can be reconciled with the idea that politics from below is also about a constructive force for political and institutional change. Studying the outcomes of political engagement—rather than taking political mobilization just as an outcome—is certainly not a new challenge, nor one remaining within the realm of contentious politics (Gamson 1992, Giugni 1998); yet this challenge needs to gain new force among scholars so as to learn more about the relationship between all forms of political participation on the one hand, and their changeable political context on the other.

Institutions and the Political Context across Public and Policy Domains

Research on fields allows for moving beyond a rigidly conflictual conception of political participation, thus opposing normative accounts that are shared across neo-liberal and neo-Marxist perspectives in their shared belief that conflict is an inherent characteristic of humans (Engelmann 2003; Gagnier 1997; Jaret 1983; Therborn 1986; Touraine 1971). Against the allegedly unchangeable nature of Wolf-Man, scholars have argued that citizens within democracy have evolved sufficiently to place "the force of better argument" before their particular interest and to the advantage of all (Habermas 1984); at the same time studies on various fields of exclusion have identified a growing quest for uncontentious politics (Cinalli and O'Flynn 2014; De Jong and Kimm 2017; Uitermark 2004). The latter, just as its contentious counterpart, is made of a dynamic and interactive process between different actors and institutions; yet the goal in this case is to agree with each other so as to share one another's fate (Rawls 1971).

Put simply, research on various fields has increasingly relied on analyses and assumptions that do not share the same normative bias of interest-based and conflict-based politics. Studies of agency, interactions, and restructuration within any field can thus conceive alternative dynamics by which actors prefer to listen carefully and to be responsive to other actors and institutions so as to agree on decision-making that may be better for all and, hence, produce a number of normatively desirable consequences (Delli Carpini et al. 2004; Fishkin 1995; Mendelberg 2002; Searing et al. 2007). The additional value of such a flexible approach is obvious. Beyond the actual occurrence of conflictual dynamics, for example in the migration "battleground" (Fontanari and Ambrosini 2018), in the labor market (Castles 2004, Esping-Andersen 1996; Hubert 2010; Kuhnle 2000), and even between parents and their children (Binney and Estes 1988; Clark et al. 2001), research on fields does not assume a necessary state of conflict, but only its potential occurrence.

Crucially, the main vectors shaping any field of politics are no longer those overlapping with the challengers and insiders respectively, but rather, those along the border between policy and public spheres. The distinction between policy and public spheres is valuable to distinguish between main institutional actors and political elites engaging in decision-making on the one hand (the policy sphere) and, on the other, movements, NGOs, civil society, and individuals engaging in discussion over decision-making and its actual practices (the public sphere). Yet the border between policy and public spheres is not a deep trench as in the traditional opposition between challengers and insiders, but rather a signpost highlighting where to look for dynamic processes transforming "phenomenologically" institutions and the political context through political participation (Ambrosini et al. 2020; Cinalli et al. 2021). Scholars need no longer stop their research when contention ends. By contrast, the scope of their investigation is extended well beyond this point, with the possibility of engaging with processes of citizenship and the overall functioning of democracy (Cinalli 2017, Della Porta 2020b).

Further emphasis can put on the *telos* that is shared across policy and public spheres. The main argument in this case is that further articulations across governors and the governed allow for engaging with fundamental norms of equality and solidarity at the basis of democratic citizenship (Cinalli and Jacobson 2020). In fact, relational dynamics at the crossroads of public and policy spheres can take a counterintuitive shape, as in "sanctuary cities" where institutions defend the implementation of a less restrictive political context vis-à-vis migrant challengers (Bauder 2017; Omen and Leenders 2020). Emphasis can also be put on private transnational legal codes and human rights instruments, both in their formal and discursive substance (Sassen 1996; Soysal 1994). Suffice it to mention the role of many courts addressing migrant issues, for example when they reinforce the legal status of undocumented workers, or again when they take their side vis-à-vis institutions and the political context (Jacobson 1996). Moreover, just as human rights through international conventions and national constitutions can hamper the top-down practicing of harsh policies and institutions in the public sphere, in the same way bottom-up mobilization in the public sphere can hamper restrictions in terms of institutions and the political context (Gurowitz 1999).

International norms and instruments can be expressed through the public sphere itself, through movements, NGOs, and civil society embracing these norms and instruments in their instances of participation. Once again, the direction of public interventions cannot be taken for granted. On the one hand, some actors and movements in the public sphere can use such international norms and instruments as a foil in promoting a more sovereigntist and nationalist agenda. For example, the contested reputation of NGOs has been used to reinforce the broader neo-nationalist position in seeking to establish the allegedly perverse role of pro-migrant solidarity. On the other hand, NGOs and other pro-migrant actors have acquired a growing salience in migration policies owing to their provision of food, money, shelter, medical care, and bureaucratic assistance, even if they do not necessarily enjoy a good reputation in the public sphere (Castles 2004). In fact, some scholars have argued that a main feature of contemporary biopolitics consists in confusing the humanitarian and the political (Fassin 2005), while the activity of NGOs has even been treated as a part of the border security industry (Andersson 2016).

Therefore, space is open for further research on interactions between citizens' responsiveness, adjustments in policymaking, and political participation in the public sphere. A holistic approach of this kind takes policy and public spheres in their role of intermediation between institutions and the political context on the one hand, and all forms of political participation on the other, in their alternating functioning of input and output respectively. As a result, recent scholarship is focussing on "congruence" across policy and public spheres with the aim to provide further theorization and crucial insights into one of the building blocks of representative democracy, namely the policy–opinion nexus, in the way that is shaped both from above and from below (Cinalli and van Hauwaert 2021).

Research on fields, in their articulation between public and policy spheres, can thus corroborate a new scholarly agenda of "post-contentious" politics. Empirical research is proving that migrants' claims are not necessarily in opposition to citizens' rights and solidarity (Cinalli et al. 2021); that a virtuous combination of labor market and unemployment regulations can balance off reduction of workers' benefits with increasing rights for the unemployed (Giugni et al. 2020); and that mobilization on youth issues is negotiated in the public domain through local contexts in a balance between public claims made by youth actors with those made by non-youth actors (Pashou et al. 2020). Of course, counter-evidences of contentious politics are still easy to find: but the idea of politics as a field across public and policy spheres is shedding light on crucial interactions taking place between institutions and the political context on the one hand, and, on the other, instances of political participation by movements, organizations of different kinds, and individuals themselves. Interactions proceed in both directions, strengthening mutual influence between institutions, policymaking and the most diverse forms of political participation. Ongoing "crisis" within contemporary democracies, far from being the last frontline of contentious politics, may be remembered in the future as an epochal moment marking the passage to an alternative model of post-contentious politics.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has engaged with long-term developments in theory and empirical research on institutions and the political context, and their impact on all forms of political participation. Institutions and the political context were originally at the centre of a mechanistic approach assessing their (distant impact) on contentious collective action. However, through continuous revisions and adjustments, they have gained the core of a sophisticated framework overarching a large number of dimensions, between the national and the local, between the collective and the individual, between static institutions and dynamic policymaking, between formal arrangements and informal governance, between political structure and discursive narratives. What is more, the original focus on contentious collective action has developed into a comprehensive scrutiny of all forms of political participation, either contentious or conventional (including voting), with growing research intersecting analyses on social movements, organizations of different kinds, and individuals themselves. These developments have enabled scholars to proceed well ahead with their theorization and empirical research, in a long journey that has readjusted research directions in a way in which the changing world around them can be understood.

The chapter has put a strong emphasis on a research agenda that takes fields of politics as its main focus for investigation. In this case, institutions and the political context can be embedded in an analysis that is context-sensitive but also considers how political participation can change context itself. Mutual influence between institutions and the political context on the one hand, and most diverse forms of political participation on the other is stronger than ever within contemporary times of "crisis": this argument has drawn on a large volume of empirical research over migration, ethnicity, unemployment, youth, and precarity in more general terms.

The strongest argument of this chapter is that scholarship is going beyond a conflict-ridden approach that is intrinsic to traditional approaches of contentious politics. By paying attention to the extensive exchanges that cut across the policy and public spheres, the chapter shows that political participation deserves full attention, not only when it is contentious. In fact, many fields of politics depend upon norms and institutions in the policy sphere intersecting with bottom-up engagement by movements, organizations of different kinds, and individuals. Being born under the star of interest-based and conflict-based politics, research on institutions and the political context has survived a long series of transformations so as to maintain its vantage point on the real world.

Nowadays research on the political context is no longer exclusively interested in its impact on large collective mobilization, but deals with more nuanced processes in search of signs of (in)congruence between policy and public spheres. As a consequence, research on institutions and the political context is also useful to support alternative models of post-contentious politics that may be based on alternative accounts of political participation, such as, for example, when actors aim to produce a better output to the advantage of all. These new avenues for focussing on non-contentious or less-than-contentious politics are essential for not losing sight of continuous recomposition and articulation of institutions and the political context.

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CHAPTER 30

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION ACROSS CULTURES

FRANZISKA DEUTSCH

Culture matters for human behavior. Among others, there is plenty of evidence for differences across cultures in social behavior such as cooperation (Gächter et al. 2005), punishment (Herrmann et al. 2008; Gächter et al. 2010), or conflict (Yuki 2003; Falk et al. 2013). This chapter examines the role of culture as a context for a particular kind of social behavior: political participation. While the impact of other contexts—institutional, economic, or social—for political behavior has received quite some attention over the past decades of research on political participation (among others, see Chapters 28, 29, and 31 in this Handbook), there is no such systematic research on how political participation (i.e., modes, scope, or determinants) differs across cultures. The problem starts already with the question of what culture actually is. Broadly described, the term "culture" refers to a common or shared system of orientation—historically transmitted patterns of meaning shared by the members of a certain group (Geertz 1973; Kashima and Gelfand 2012). Researchers like Schwartz (1999, 2008) or Inglehart (1997) see the value patterns prevailing in cultures as their most important characteristic because these value orientations consistently influence how people think, feel, and act across situations. This chapter follows their understanding that cultures differ according to prevailing values in societies, and will examine their impact as a context for political participation.

The view that culture matters as a relevant contextual factor implies that culture, however conceptualized and operationalized, should not only be used as a control variable in empirical research on political participation, for instance when showing that effects (such as gender or socioeconomic status) are universal. In this logic, it is also not sufficient to only describe cultural differences (As Ross (1997: 313) puts it: "It's not good enough to say 'They did it because they're Chinese.'") without providing an explanation for these differences.

This chapter attempts to approach the role of culture more systematically: Cultural value orientations are an important independent variable for studying political participation in their own right. This will be shown in the following by reviewing three major important approaches to the study of cultural value dimensions and examining their impact on political participation: the psychologist Geert Hofstede (2001, 2010, 2011) identified four (now six) cultural value dimensions, among others power distance and individualism vs. collectivism. Shalom Schwartz's approach (1999, 2006, 2008) on nation-level values structure is made up of three value dimensions: autonomy vs. embeddedness, hierarchy vs. egalitarianism, and mastery vs. harmony. Schwartz (2008) clustered different countries into cultural world regions (e.g., Western Europe, Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, etc.) due to the different meaning and distribution of these values. And finally, the political scientists Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel developed a two-dimensional value space composed of traditional–religious vs. secular–rational values and survival vs. self-expression values (Inglehart and Baker 2000; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Welzel 2013). The researchers showed that the second cultural dimension of self-expression or emancipative values, closely linked to Inglehart's post-materialism concept of the 1970s (Inglehart 1977), explains societal-level differences in elite-challenging or protest participation (Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Welzel and Deutsch 2012; Welzel 2013).

The chapter is structured as follows: in a first step, the concept of culture will be explained, both as political culture (as understood by Almond and Verba 1963) and cultural value patterns, and the theoretical role of culture as a context factor for political participation will be outlined. Then, the three empirical, dimensional approaches to culture (Hofstede, Schwartz, Inglehart and Welzel) will be presented and an overview about empirical studies, if they exist, on the relationship between culture and political participation will be given, reviewing the three approaches as explanatory frameworks for different forms of political participation. Using data among others from the most recent wave of the European Values Study and World Values Survey (EVS/WVS 2017-2020), International IDEA, and the Varieties of Democracy V-Dem project, illustrative empirical evidence complements this overview. The key message of this chapter is that while often overlooked, culture indeed provides a fruitful approach to the study of political participation across contexts and should be included more systematically in empirical research.

What is Culture? Why Does it Matter for Political Participation?

In the context of political science research, culture is usually understood as political culture.[1] Its definition by Almond and Verba (1963: 13) as "the particular distribution of patterns of orientation towards political objects prevailing among the members of a nation" is still valid today. Political culture can be understood as the psychological foundation of the political system which links individual orientations and behavior to political objects.

The impact of the "Civic Culture" study by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) for cultural accounts in research on political participation and democracy cannot be overestimated. Until this seminal work, political science was primarily concerned with the structures, institutions, actors, or political processes when addressing the conditions for the persistence of political systems. Almond and Verba (1963) examined the cultural preconditions of democracy in five countries, and they found that the political mass orientations matter for the stability of political systems, more precisely for the congruence between the political structure (the authority patterns of political institutions and processes) and the political culture (the authority orientations in the population).

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[1] The political scientist Max Kaase (1983) once described the endeavor to define the term "political culture" as an attempt to nail a pudding to the wall.

These authority orientations can either be cognitive (i.e., knowledge and beliefs about politics), affective (i.e., positive or negative feelings toward political objects), or evaluative (i.e., judgments about political options and processes). They are directed at four different types of political objects: the political system as a whole, the input dimension (e.g., political parties, interest groups), the output dimension (e.g., bureaucracies that implement policies), and (4) the self, which refers to the individual's role as a citizen.

Depending on the particular distribution of orientations towards political objects, the authors postulated three ideal–typical political cultures: a parochial culture, in which the population predominantly knows nothing or little about politics and is rather unpolitical; a subject culture, in which the population is aware of the state and its policies but is predominantly passive; and a participant culture, in which the population holds high cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientations towards all political objects, is politically interested, and actively participates. It was this participant culture that was considered to be most compatible with democratic political structures (Almond and Verba 1963: 20).

In reality, however, Almond and Verba (1963) did not find this ideal type of culture most conducive to democracy, but a mix of subject and participatory orientations. The authors called this mix the "civic culture": a (smaller) group of active, participatory citizens, and a (larger) group) of loyal, law-obeying and supporting subjects, which makes even a very small group of parochials tolerable in a democracy. It is important to note that Almond and Verba's civic culture is not a truly participatory culture, as Dalton and Welzel (2014: 4) argue: "Even as participant citizens, they are aware of their limited role in representative democracies, which focuses on electing representatives within organizations or public office holders. Direct involvement in policy formulations and policy implementations is not part of the ordinary citizen's standard repertoire, not even the participant citizen". By contrast, Almond and Verba (1963: 31) argue that the civic culture is "an allegiant participant culture. Individuals are not only oriented to political inputs, they are oriented positively to the input structures and the input process".[2] As a consequence of the Civic Culture study, elements of this allegiant culture (e.g., civic competence, institutional trust, or support for democracy) have been at the core of political culture research on determinants of political participation.

However, the fact that culture in political science is often used synonymously with political culture should not obscure the fact that the concept of culture is much broader—and therefore even more difficult to define. Any attempt to conceptualize culture for empirical research must remain selective and incomplete (for a critical reflection on various definitions of culture, see Jahoda 2012), and some scholars even outright reject the attempt to arrive at a generally valid definition of culture (Segall 1984).

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[2] Dalton and Welzel (2014) argue that, beginning with the results of the Political Action study by Barnes and Kaase et al. (1979) and the increasing levels of elite-challenging political participation, this conceptualization of a democratic political culture has been countered by a different model: that of an assertive culture, which is characterized by critical and dissatisfied citizens (see also Klingemann 1999, 2014; Norris 2011).

Among those who attempt to define the term, culture is described as a group phenomenon or societal-level concept (Kaasa 2021, 1), as historically transmitted patterns of meaning (Geertz 1973; Kashima and Gelfand 2012) or a semiotic mediation system (Valsiner 2000; Magioglou 2014b). One of the most famous definitions by Hofstede (2010: 6) is borrowed from the computer language as "software of the mind": "Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". Ross (1997: 301) argues that "[c]ulture is usually thought of as a worldview which explains why and how individuals and groups behave as they do and includes both cognitive and affective beliefs about social reality and assumptions about when, where, and how people in one's culture and those in other cultures are likely to act in particular ways."

What is the relationship between culture and politics in general, and culture and political participation in particular? Ross (1997, 2000) offers a number of explanations how culture matters for political behavior: first, culture generally frames the contest in which politics occurs and people participate in. These cultural frames address conceptions and organization of community, authority, and conflict, and they describe what people find valuable and worth fighting over, as well as the formal and informal rules that shape the contest. Second, culture determines and links individual and collective identities and thus forms the framework for individual political behavior. In other words, culture makes "particular actions more or less likely" (Ross 1997: 304). Third, culture defines the boundaries between groups and thus determines group membership and what behavior is considered appropriate within or between groups. Fourth, culture serves as a kind of blueprint for interpreting the behavior and motives of others. And finally, political groups and elites organize and mobilize their support through culturally relevant questions (keyword: "culture war"), making culture a political resource (Ross, 2000: 34–41).

The concept of culture is difficult to grasp. Values researchers such as Schwartz (1999, 2008), Inglehart (1997) or Hofstede (2001) have argued that the value patterns prevailing in a society are the most central characteristic of culture and that they influence the thinking, perception, and behavior of individuals in a society. Values can be held by individuals and groups. They "transcend specific situations, (…) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (…) are ordered by relative importance" (Schwartz 1992: 4). Generally speaking, values are "conceptions of the desirable" (Kluckhohn 1951: 395) and determine what kind of beliefs, goals, and behaviors are considered acceptable. And if values are understood as widely accepted conceptions of what is good and desirable, then the prevailing values in a society formulate, implicitly and explicitly, expectations to all its members. Welzel and Deutsch (2012: 467) described this as social contagion, arguing that values and related behavior (such as political participation) are communicated to other people and thus generate "a mental 'climate' that everyone feels". This makes the predominant values in a society a key characteristic of culture (Schwartz 2008: 8).

Political Participation across Cultures: Empirical Evidence

Focusing on the question if and how political participation differs across cultures, the following section will provide a brief overview of the three different concepts of culture by Hofstede (2001, 2010), Schwartz (2006, 2014), and Inglehart and Welzel (2005), review the existing literature on the relationship between each cultural approach and political participation across culture, and present new (descriptive) empirical evidence as illustration. Culture is understood here as the prevailing value patterns in a society. This is important for two reasons: One, differences in value patterns reflect differences across cultures, arguing that cultures differ *because* individuals in different societies consider different things important and desirable. And two, these three different cultural approaches offer an explanation of *how* cultures differ and hence *why* we find variation in mode and scope of political participation when we compare societies.

Hofstede's Cultural Approach

The cultural dimensions according to the Dutch psychologist Geert Hofstede go back to a study on cultural differences in companies: Between 1967 and 1973, Hofstede (2001) surveyed more than 100,000 IBM employees in more than 70 countries. He was able to show that cultural differences are of great importance for internationally operating companies, in particular for the organization and the interaction between employees and/or management. This IBM study has developed into one of the most important cultural concepts in research worldwide; its findings are also applied in the practice of organizations and companies under the keywords of intercultural competence and communication.

As previously mentioned, Hofstede (2001: 5) describes culture as the "collective programming of the mind". Cultures are deeply rooted in unconscious values, understood as "broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others".

Hofstede (2001, 2010) assesses the cultural dimensions by which societies differ significantly with the help of a constantly evolving questionnaire, the so-called Values Survey Modules (VSM; the most recent version dates from 2013: VSM2013).[3] Initially, he identified four cultural dimensions, later two further dimensions were added: (1) Power distance ("related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality"), (2) uncertainty avoidance ("related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future"), (3) individualism vs collectivism ("related to the integration of individuals into primary groups"), (4) masculinity vs. femininity ("related to the division of emotional roles between women and men"), (5) long-term vs. short-term orientation ("related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past"), and (6) indulgence vs. restraint ("related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life") (Hofstede 2011: 8).

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[3] For more information on Hofstede's research, see https://geerthofstede.com/.

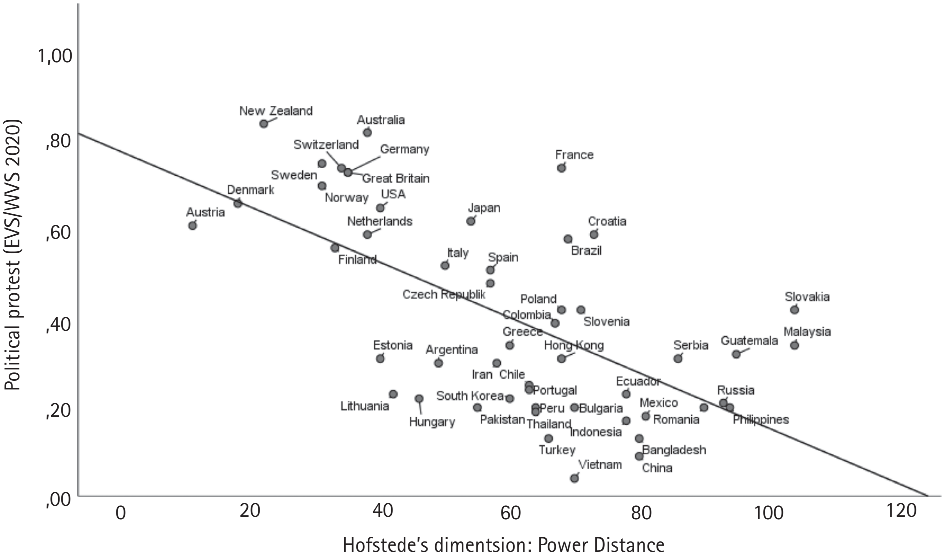

FIGURE 30.1 Hofstede's Power Distance and Political Protest

N = 50 societies, r = -.63, p ≤ .000.

Hofstede cultural dimensions: Values Survey Module (2013), publicly available for download at: https://geerthofstede.com/. Also see Hofstede (2001) and Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010).

Political protest: EVS/WVS (2020). European Values Study and World Values Survey: Joint EVS/WVS 2017-2021. "Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some different forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have actually done any of these. (1) Signing a petition, (2) joining a boycott, (3) attending lawful demonstrations." The index (scale from 0 to 1, to be interpreted like percentages) shows the share of respondents in each society who report to have participated in at least one of these activities.

Empirical evidence on the relationship between Hofstede's cultural dimensions and levels and modes of political participation is scarce. The few exceptions include a study by Milfont (2012) who found a connection between various cultural dimensions of Hofstede and environmentally friendly behavior (and attitudes) in a society. Power distance, one of Hofstede's dimensions of culture, is negatively linked with protest participation, meaning that societies in which an unequal distribution of power is accepted show lower levels of this form of bottom-up political activism (Cohen and Valencia 2008). This finding is also illustrated in Figure 30.1, which plots country scores for power distance with very recent data on people's involvement in protest activism (Joint European Values Study and World Values Survey 2017–2021).

The negative link between the two—high-power distance societies show less protest participation than low-power distance societies—is intuitive: Hofstede (2011: 9) describes power distance as "inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above", addressing the degree to which ordinary people accept and expect power to be distributed unequally. In small-power distance societies where people expect that the use of power is legitimized and that society is organized less hierarchically, people seem to feel more empowered, hold elites more accountable, and therefore protest is more pronounced. To illustrate this further: the average level of protest participation in high-power distance

Table 30.1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions and Political Participation

	Voter turnout		Political protest		Civil society	
	Correlation	(N)	Correlation	N	Correlation	N
Power distance	–.48**	(35)	–.63***	(50)	–.56***	(50)
Individualism	.44**	(35)	.76***	(50)	.50***	(50)
Masculinity	–.07	(35)	.03	(50)	–.13	(50)
Uncertainty avoidance	–.61***	(35)	–.23	(50)	–.15	(50)
Long-term orientation	–.09	(41)	.02	(63)	.10	(63)
Indulgence	.37*	(41)	.53***	(64)	.39**	(63)

* p ≤.05. ** p ≤.01. *** p ≤ .000. Correlation coefficients are Pearson's r.
Hofstede's dimension: Power Distance: Values Survey Module (2013), see Figure 30.1.
Voter turnout: Voter turnout at last parliamentary election. International IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout. Only cases classified as Electoral Democracy by Freedom House and without compulsory vote have been included.
Political protest: EVS/WVS (2020). European Values Study and World Values Survey: Joint EVS/WVS 2017–2021. Scale from 0 to 1, see Figure 30.1.
Civil society: Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Dataset, Version 11.1; Core Civil Society Index (CCSI).

societies is around 29 percent, whereas almost 53 percent of the people participate in low-power distance societies.[4]

Those empirical findings largely correspond to the results in Table 30.1 which presents a general overview of the relationship (measured as correlation coefficients) between the six cultural dimensions of Hofstede on the one hand, and voter turnout and political protest as two different forms of political participation, as well as a measure of the robustness and quality of civil society on the other hand.

Clear patterns can be found. Four out of the six cultural dimensions are linked to at least one aspect of political participation, the exceptions are the dimensions of masculinity and long-term orientations which cannot explain any cultural variation in political behavior. Power distance is negatively linked to all three forms of political participation, but the effect of empowerment is strongest for participation in political protest. The cultural dimensions of individualism and indulgence show positive correlations with political participation. Individualistic (vs. collectivistic) societies are characterized by weak ties and an emphasis on self-expression, and indulgent (vs. restraint) cultures stress the quality of life instead of strict norm regulation (Hofstede 2011: 11–15), which in particular seem to activate protest participation and civil society activism. Uncertainty avoidance is only linked to voter turnout, and here in a negative way—strong uncertainty avoidance decreases turnout. People in uncertainty avoiding societies need strict behavioral rules to avoid ambiguity, and citizens feel less competent towards political authorities (Hofstede 2011: 10), which explains why electoral participation declines as uncertainty avoidance goes up.

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[4] Results are based on a median split.

Schwartz's Cultural Approach

Schwartz (1992, 2008, 2014) assumes that there are universally valid goal orientations, since all individuals and societies must find answers to the same basic human needs. Schwartz (2011) makes a key distinction between value systems for individuals (individual level) and for societies (aggregate level). He summarizes the basic values of individuals in a total of ten universally valid value types (e.g., tradition, power, universalism or self-direction), while seven (different) values are postulated for the purpose of examining value patterns in cross-national comparisons. Both approaches (referred to as personal values and cultural values) have the survey method and the graphical presentation in a values circle (using multidimensional scaling) in common: Values that are opposite each other are incompatible, that is, in conflict with each other. In contrast, values that are close to each other in the circle are more likely to be compatible because they are aligned with similar, complementary goals.

For Schwartz (2014: 549), cultural values are desirable goals that apply beyond a specific situation, located outside the individual: "(…) it refers to the press to which individuals are exposed by virtue of living in particular social systems". This "press" can take many forms in a society, such as primes, language patterns, expectations, constraints, taken-for-granted practices, and their frequencies "express the underlying normative value emphases that are at the heart of the culture" (ibid.).

To arrive at cultural values at the aggregate level, Schwartz (1999, 2006, 2008, 2014) argues that there are three central questions for the functioning of a society, which each society must answer for itself: (1) The relationship of the individual to the group ("To what extent should people be treated as autonomous versus as embedded in their groups?"), (2) the organizational principle of the group ("How can human interdependencies be managed in a way that elicits coordinated, productive activity rather than disruptive behaviour or withholding of effort?"), and (3) the relationship between people and the environment around them ("To what extent should individuals and groups control and change their social and natural environment vs. leaving it undisturbed and unchanged?"). From these three questions, Schwartz derives three basic dimensions for distinguishing cultures, embeddedness vs. autonomy, hierarchy vs. egalitarianism, and mastery vs. harmony. The values are measured in a questionnaire (Schwartz Value Survey, SVS), where respondents are asked to rate the importance of values as guiding principles in people's lives. This research has been conducted using 233 samples from 68 countries, revealing 47 different cultural values (Schwartz 2014: 555).

These values can be further condensed into a total of seven value orientations: embeddedness (social order, obedience, respect for tradition), intellectual autonomy (broadmindedness, curiosity), affective autonomy (pleasure), hierarchy (authority, humility), egalitarianism (social justice, equality), harmony (unity with nature, world at peace) and mastery (ambition, daring).

Research on political participation using Schwartz's concept of values has mainly focused on the individual level, the impact of the so-called basic personal values for political action. Most of these studies have been conducted cross-culturally. Several studies showed how personal values determine voting decisions (Barnea and Schwartz 1998; Caprara et al. 2006; Schwartz et al. 2010; Caprara et al. 2012), left–right self-placement (Caprara et al. 2017), and political activism at large (Pacheco and Owen 2015; Vecchione et al. 2015). There is some indication, however, that this is in general more the case for unconventional than for conventional participation, where for example power or tradition values are negatively linked: "Unconventional political activism is often directed against prevailing norms and practices, and aims to change them by using methods other than those available when following institutionalized norms" (Vecchione et al. 2015: 102).

To the best of my knowledge, there is no research on how Schwartz's concept of culture is linked to political participation. In one of his overviews on cultural values, Schwartz (2014) finds significant macro-level correlations between culture and the quality of governance (e.g., corruption), the level of democracy, and economic factors. It is assumed that there is also a relationship with levels of political participation, but this is certainly a research gap.

Inglehart and Welzel's Cultural Approach

The third approach on cultural dimensions is based on research on values conducted by the political scientists Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel. It has become the most important values concept in political science over the past 20 years. As political culture research deals with societal patterns of orientation (such as beliefs, attitudes, or values) and their political relevance, it is therefore not surprising that this cultural approach does not only provide a theoretical explanation for how culture impacts political participation, but also offers a broad range of empirical studies to show that this is indeed the case. This is, however, not the only difference from the psychological approaches to culture by Hofstede and Schwartz. Inglehart and Welzel also go beyond a comparison of cultures and describing cultural differences: they also make predictions about cultural change and its potential consequences for societies and politics.

Based on data from the World Values Survey, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) have proposed a cultural map with a two-dimensional value space: On the first dimension "traditional" and "secular-rational" values oppose each other; on the second dimension, it is "survival values" versus "(self-)expression values". The two value dimensions are the result of a two-stage cultural change, which in turn reflects different stages in a country's socioeconomic development. In the industrialization phase, priorities shift away from traditional (often religious) values toward secular values. In the post-industrialization phase, people place more emphasis on self-determination and self-development, while purely material values lose importance. This idea is closely related to Inglehart's postmaterialism concept from the 1970s, which assumes that people in postindustrial societies, after experiencing unprecedented levels of peace and economic prosperity after World War II, have been moving away from the goal of increasing their material standard of living and shifting towards postmaterialist priorities in life. These include, for example, questions of self-determination, sense-actualization, equality, or environmental protection.

Welzel (2013) has developed this further and proposed emancipative values as the psychological manifestation of a broader human empowerment process, which emphasize human self-expression, freedom of choice, and equality of opportunities. These values encourage people to be masters of their own lives and active participants in their society's development (Welzel 2013: 47).

Research has shown that these values—postmaterialist, self-expression, and emancipative—coupled with a process of cognitive mobilization have a systematic and long-lasting impact on political participation in societies. In fact, the transformative force of this fundamental cultural change for the political action repertoire, affecting both the levels and modes of political participation, are a fundamental aspect of the theory and the empirical evidence. Going further, Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 2014) have argued that, via the link from values to participation, self-expression or emancipative values contribute to a better quality of political institutions. As Welzel (2007) could show, in democratic countries, emancipative values help to sustain democracy and prevent movements away from democracy; in undemocratic countries, these values facilitate changes towards democracy.

Early on, Inglehart (1977) had argued that postmaterialist values bring about higher levels of engagement in political protest while other, more traditional forms of political participation would decline. Similar results could be found in the Political Action study by Barnes, Kaase et al. (1979) who did not only coin the term "unconventional participation" for protest forms of political participation, such as petitions, demonstrations, or boycotts, but also demonstrated an empirical relationship between postmaterialist values and political protest (see also Dalton et al. 2009; Copeland 2014; Stolle et al. 2015). Using the concept of self-expression values, these analyses have been extended by Inglehart and Welzel (2005), showing that the expansion of the political action repertoire is real and widespread, and that this is a consequence of a cultural change towards more self-actualization, emancipation, choice, and equality. To summarize the cultural effect on political participation: "[T]he higher the level of self-expression values, the larger the subsequent increase in elite-challenging mass action" (Inglehart and Welzel 2005: 123).

Self-expression or emancipative values are closely linked to a stronger sense of agency and growing demands for democracy, a motivation to express oneself, encouraging the participation in protest (or, elite-challenging) activities (Inglehart and Welzel 2005: 115–126; Welzel 2010). This mechanism works at the individual level, but also at the societal level: "The social prevalence of a value constitutes a cultural factum in its own right that affects individual behaviour irrespective of whether the individual in question holds the respective value" (Welzel and Deutsch 2012: 479).[5]

Figure 30.2 supports these previous findings. Using the most recent data of the European Values Study and the World Values Survey (2017–2020), the figure shows the relationship between the prevalence of emancipative values and the level of political protest across 77 societies. Emancipative values (x-axis) are measured according to Welzel (2013), combining liberating and egalitarian orientations in four domains: choice, equality, voice, and autonomy (Welzel 2013: 67). Political protest (y-axis) is measured as the share of people in a society who report to have participated in at least one of the following forms of political participation: signing a petition, joining a boycott, or attending a lawful demonstration.[6]

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[5] In fact, Welzel and Deutsch (2012) could show that, beyond the individual-level and the cultural-level effects of emancipative values on non-violent protest, the individual-level values develop their full effect only in conjunction with the matching cultural context.

[6] Using an additive scale yields the same result: $r = .84$, $p \leq .000$.

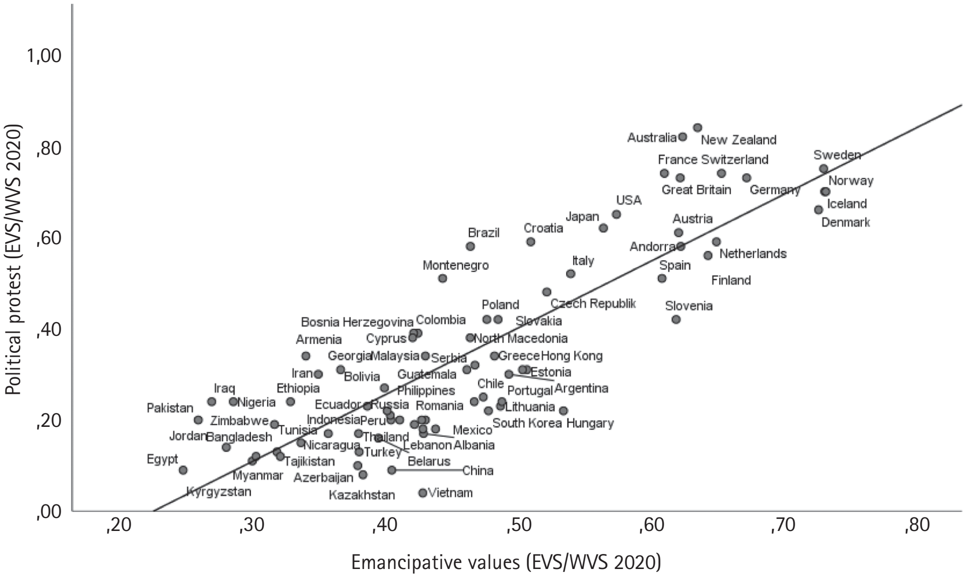

FIGURE 30.2 Emancipative Values and Political Protest

N = 77 societies, r = .84, p ≤ .000.

Source: EVS/WVS (2020). European Values Study and World Values Survey: Joint EVS/WVS 2017-2021. Political protest: The index (scale from 0 to 1, to be interpreted like percentages) shows the share of respondents in each society who report to have participated in at least one of the activities: petitions, boycotts, demonstrations. See Figure 30.1. Emancipative values: Measured on a scale from 0 to 1, according to Welzel (2013), online appendix (pp. 15–27): www.cambridge.org/welzell. The measure of emancipative values combines liberating and egalitarian orientations in four domains: choice, equality, voice, and autonomy (Welzel 2013: 67). Choice measures how much people value having freedom in lifestyle and reproductive choices, asking respondents how acceptable they think (a) divorce, (b) abortion, and (c) homosexuality are. Equality refers to gender equality, asking respondents how much they agree with the statements that (a) "education is more important for a boy than a girl," (b) "when jobs are scarce, men should have priority over women to get a job," and (c) "men make better political leaders than women." People's voice includes three items that measure postmaterialist values (Inglehart 1977), asking the respondents if they give first, second, or no priority to (a) "protecting freedom of speech," (b) "giving people more say in important government decisions," (c) "giving people more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities." Autonomy is measured by asking the respondents whether they consider (a) independence and (b) imagination as desirable qualities when raising a child but not (c) obedience. To combine the twenty items, they are first normalized between 0 and 1 (with fractions of 1 for intermediate positions) and then averaged into the four domain sub-indices. In a second step, the four sub-indices are averaged into the overall measure of emancipative values, providing a multi-point index between 0 and 1. Emancipative values: See Figure 30.2.

As Figure 30.2 clearly indicates, we find higher levels of political protest in societies in which emancipative values are more pronounced. This ecological effect of values can be seen as an effect of culture on protest participation.

Figures 30.3 and 30.4 show that cultural differences prevail also in other forms of political participation. Figure 30.3 plots voter turnout against emancipative values, using all countries from Figure 30.2 for which election turnout is a meaningful indicator for free and voluntary political participation. In other words, countries that have compulsory voting or are not classified as electoral democracies are excluded, leaving 44 countries in the analysis. Data for voter turnout refer to participation in the last parliamentary election and come from International IDEA.

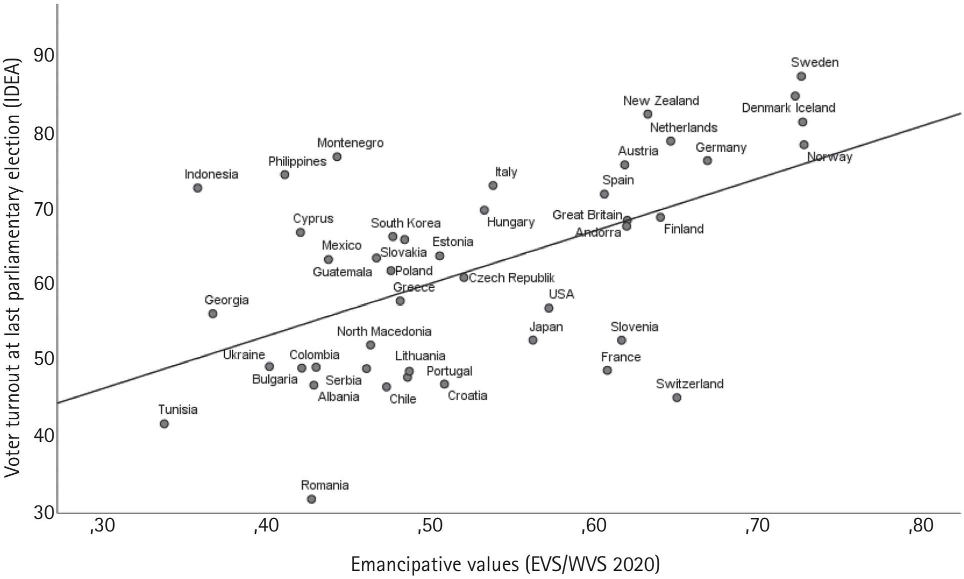

FIGURE 30.3 Emancipative Values and Voter Turnout

N = 44 societies, r = .55, p ≤ .000. Only cases classified as Electoral Democracy by Freedom House and without compulsory vote have been included.

Sources: Voter turnout database International IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout; EVS/WVS (2020). European Values Study and World Values Survey: Joint EVS/WVS 2017-2021.

Voter turnout at last parliamentary election: Measured in percent. International IDEA uses the Voting Age Population (VAP), as well as the number of Registered Voters (REG) as indicators.

Emancipative values: See Figure 30.2.

Although the relationship is not as strong as for political protest, it is also evident that there are cultural differences with regard to electoral participation: overall, voter turnout is higher in societies with higher levels of emancipative values. This is interesting for two reasons: First, because studies on voter turnout have so far not accounted for the impact of culture but focused primarily on institutional, socioeconomic, or situational factors (Geys 2006; Stockemer 2017). And second, while cultural change towards postmaterialist, self-expression or emancipative values has led to an increase in elite-challenging activities, the same cultural change has been associated with a decline in institutionalized forms of political participation, including voting (Inglehart 1977; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). This is not to say that these findings exclude each other, but rather to take this as an indication to examine the cultural influence on electoral participation more systematically.

Figure 30.4 demonstrates the societal-level relationship between emancipative values and a robust civil society, “understood as one that enjoys autonomy from the state and in which citizens freely and actively pursue their political and civic goals” (Coppedge et al. 2021a: 306). The Core Civil Society Index (CCSI) is taken from the Varieties of Democracy project.

As shown, the quality of civil society differs according to the level of emancipative values: an emancipative cultural climate is conducive to a context in which civil society can prosper and allow for opportunities for political participation.

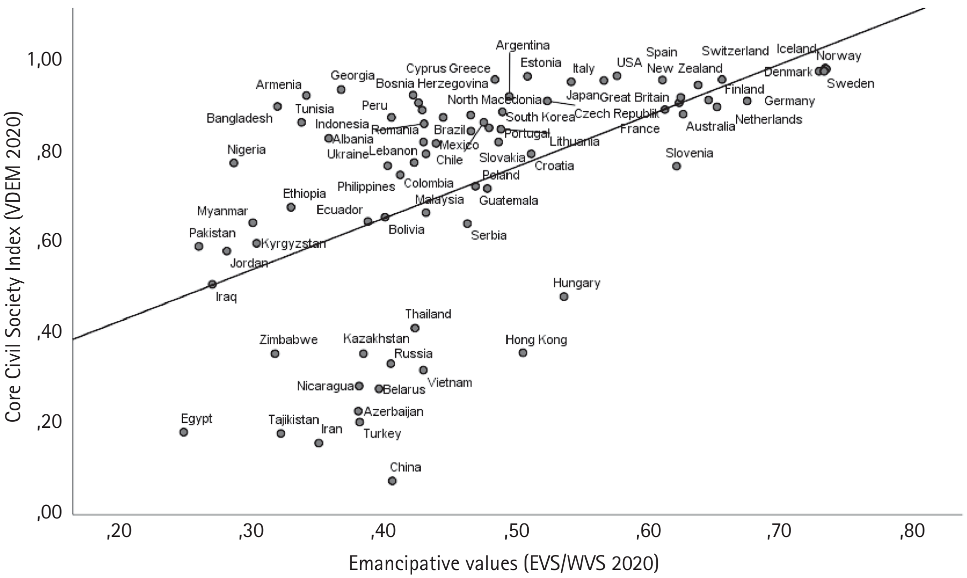

FIGURE 30.4 Emancipative Values and Civil Society

N = 75 societies, r = .55, p ≤ .000.

Source: Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Dataset, Version 11.1 (Coppedge et al. 2021b); EVS/WVS (2020). European Values Study and World Values Survey: Joint EVS/WVS 2017-2021.

Core Civil Society Index (CCSI): Measured on a scale from 0 to 1. The core civil society index CCSI by V-Dem uses expert ratings to assesses the robustness of civil society: "(. . .) CCSI is designed to provide a measure of a robust civil society, understood as one that enjoys autonomy from the state and in which citizens freely and actively pursue their political and civic goals, however conceived."

Emancipative values: See Figure 30.2.

So far, the figures showed that political participation varies according to differences in value patterns prevailing in societies, which is taken as a proxy for cultural differences. To illustrate this further, Table 30.2 shows the level of political participation in different modes across so-called cultural zones. These zones originate from the cultural map based on data from the World Values Survey,[7] which does not only include cultural dimensions but also shows that societies can be grouped together into regional clusters called cultural zones (Inglehart and Baker 2000; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Welzel 2013), given their positional proximity in the cultural map as well as shared history, language, or tradition. For example, societies belonging to the group of Protestant Europe are usually clustered together in the top right corner of the map, a result of their high levels of secular as well as self-expression or emancipative values.

Table 30.2 shows quite some variation of levels of political participation across eleven cultural zones. The differences across cultures is least pronounced for voter turnout, but they exist, the lowest average turnout is found in Islamic countries of the Middle East, the highest in Protestant Europe. The biggest difference can be found in protest participation, which supports the results in Figure 30.2: countries in Central Asia show the lowest level of political protest, English-speaking Western countries the highest.

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[7] See the website of the WVS: https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp.

Table 30.2 Cultural Zones and Political Participation

	Voter turnout	Political protest	Civil society
Sub-Saharan Africa	–	0.22	0.60
Middle East	0.42	0.18	0.47
South Asia	0.74	0.21	0.74
Central Asia	–	0.15	0.45
East Asia	0.59	0.21	0.51
Ex-Communist East	0.51	0.27	0.74
Ex-Communist West	0.59	0.39	0.79
Catholic Europe	0.64	0.49	0.92
Protestant Europe	0.75	0.68	0.95
Latin America	0.56	0.29	0.74
English-speaking West	0.69	0.76	0.92

Data entries on a scale from 0 to 1 for comparison. For voter turnout and protest, data entries can be interpreted as percentages.
Cultural zones: Following Welzel (2013, online appendix, 8). Sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe), Middle East (Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia, Turkey), South Asia (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines), Central Asia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Myanmar, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam), Ex-Communist East (Albania, Belarus, Bosnia Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine), Ex-Communist West (Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia), Catholic Europe (Andorra, Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain), Protestant Europe (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland), Latin America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru), English-speaking West (Australia, New Zealand, UK, USA). Please note that the composition of the cultural zones may differ for voter turnout.
Voter turnout: Voter turnout at last parliamentary election. International IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout . Only cases classified as Electoral Democracy by Freedom House and without compulsory vote have been included.
Political protest: EVS/WVS (2020). European Values Study and World Values Survey: Joint EVS/WVS 2017–2021. Scale from 0 to 1, see figure 1. All countries weighted equally.
Civil society: Varieties of Democracy V-Dem Dataset, Version 11.1; Core Civil Society Index (CCSI).

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to argue that culture matters—not only as a reference for identity and group formation, or as an interpretive framework for the motives and behavior of others, but also in its behavioral consequences. Using, among others, the recent joint wave of the European Values Study and the World Values Survey (2017–2021), this chapter presented illustrative empirical evidence for cultural differences in political participation.

With the exception of the cultural approach by Inglehart and Welzel, however, the impact of culture has not been systematically studied to predict cultural differences in scope and modes of political participation. What are the reasons for that? Why has culture not received more attention?

One reason is straightforward: variation in levels and forms of political participation are usually examined from a political science perspective, with a focus on the impact of cleavages, institutions, or the economy (see Chapters 28, 29, and 31 in this Handbook). Two of the most relevant cultural concepts, those of Hofstede and Schwartz, however, originate from psychology where systematic comparisons across a large number of countries is rare. It seems that, maybe with exceptions of the approach by Inglehart and Welzel, disciplinary boundaries unfortunately prevail, while a combination of different context factors—including culture—would be desirable.

Another reason for the niche existence lies in the difficulty of understanding culture as a dynamic construct: Since culture is about historically transmitted systems of meaning, the concept is based on great stability (Almond and Verba 1963; Inglehart 1977). This, in turn, makes it difficult to use culture as an explanatory factor for changes in political participation, including the political action repertoire.

A third aspect is certainly the difficulty of defining culture as a shared system of meaning and thus ultimately making it suitable as a unit of analysis for empirical research. As Ross (1997: 311) phrases it pointedly: "What is culture?, some may ask, meaning, 'How do I know one when I see one?' ". It is also often unclear who and how many people (must) share a pattern of meaning in order to become relevant as a cultural unit. It is undisputed that the nation of a country is the bearer of cultural characteristics such as a common language, history, or value system. However, smaller (subcultures) or larger cultural units that are grouped together on the basis of common history, tradition, language, religion, etc. into regional clusters such as cultural zones (Inglehart and Baker 2000; Inglehart and Welzel 2005) or civilizations (Huntington 1996) are also suitable carriers of culture. This, in turn, leads to the question of the boundaries and levels of cultural units and the possibility of feeling part of several cultural units at the same time (Ross 2000: 68).

While acknowledging all of these issues and challenges, recent contributions to the study of culture provide a very interesting stimulus for future research, suggesting that those three so-called dimensional theories of culture presented here in this chapter can be merged into one single values system or universe, both conceptually and empirically (Kaasa 2021; Fog 2021). Given the very different theoretical foundations of the three approaches, their truly diverse empirical bases (Hofstede originally collected data among IBM employees, Schwartz among teachers and students, and Inglehart and Welzel used nationally representative survey data from the World Values Survey), as well as the different statistical techniques of data reduction (Schwartz used MDS, Hofstede and Inglehart and Welzel factor analysis), these results are not only surprising and exciting. It should also boost our confidence in the validity of the concept and measurement(s) of culture, opening the door further for cultural accounts in the study of political behavior.

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CHAPTER 31

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND THE ECONOMY

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Politics and the economy have always been deeply intertwined. Economic conditions are foundational to the depth and breadth of formal political participation, such as voting, the electoral process, and lobbying. Many of the capacities of political institutions involve regulating or ordering the economy in some way. As Polanyi (1957: 250) theorized, the economy is “embedded and enmeshed in institutions.” Not surprisingly, then, the vitality of the economy and people’s experience of economic conditions in their lives shape political engagement.

Worsening economic conditions, especially when experienced collectively, can lead individuals to seek to alleviate injustices and help people attain their aspirations. This participation is both channeled through institutional politics as well as through extra-institutional activism. Thus, the economy is both a driving force of much political participation as well as the object of activist campaigns (King and Pearce 2010). Interestingly, however, in recent years we see a general decline in traditional forms of political engagement, like voting (Blais and Rubinson 2013), even as mass movements have arisen that contentiously engage with corporations and demand changes to capitalist practices.

Our chapter examines the various ways that economic conditions shape contemporary political participation. Many of these conditions are endemic to capitalism, but we will also assess the role of major economic players—such as corporations—in fomenting economic strains that have the potential to disrupt politics and create new waves and forms of political engagement. We begin by describing the development of theories about politics and the economy, reflecting on their implications for understanding political participation. We demonstrate how this literature has evolved to reflect changing forms of political engagement, including forms of collective action that work across institutional contexts, often directly targeting corporations. We then describe the different forms of political participation on which these theories have focused, before turning to an increasingly important form of political participation that occurs through social movement activism targeting corporations, the primary societal context in which economic production, distribution, and income and wealth allocation occur. We conclude the chapter by assessing how significant changes in economic conditions and political environments have generated the need for new ways to think about the relationship between the economy and political participation.

The Economy and Politics

Changes in economic conditions may be the spark that triggers new waves of political mobilization, as we saw in a number of recent movements, including the Yellow Vest movement in France and the 15M movement in Spain (Hughes 2011; Giugni and Grasso 2016; Grossman 2019). Increases in taxes coupled with government austerity measures motivated citizens to take to the streets. Many in the movements saw their actions as alternatives to voting—a more direct way to make their political voices heard and express dissatisfaction with the government's leadership in the economy. Not surprisingly, participants in the movements tended to come from working-class backgrounds that were most greatly affected by economic downturns and inequality. Like other populist movements that arose across the globe in the 2010s (Eichengreen 2018), participants viewed their actions as protests against "the venality of political and economic elites" (Hughes 2011: 409). Governments alone were not the targets of these economically oriented movements. They sought to call into question the entire elite structure, including corporate powers, that reinforced the status quo and the resulting economic hardship.

Much political action in contemporary society reflects grievances with formal political institutions and the leaders who shape them, but politically active citizens also often join forces with broader movements seeking to stem the tide of injustices and devastation perpetrated in the economic realm. Examples include the mobilization of the global environmental movement (Carmichael, Jenkins, and Brulle 2012; Giugni and Grasso 2015), economic populism (Eichengreen 2018), and global justice and human rights movements (Della Porta 2009; Tsutsui and Shin 2008), all of which are movements expressing collective frustration with the consequences of capitalism. Indeed, even on the Right, nationalist movements have arisen to vocalize frustration with the global expansion of markets and the consequent erosion of national identities (Snyder 2019). These movements, like many before them, occur in waves and are multifaceted, focusing their efforts beyond the state to target corporations and economic elites (Giugni and Grasso 2019). Forms of political engagement include more traditional forms of democratic participation, like voting, but have expanded to include a variety of other tactics, including boycotts, protests, and social media activism.

How do we explain the various forms of political participation reflecting dissatisfaction with economic conditions? Theories from political sociology and political science offer lenses with which to understand these phenomena. Later in the chapter, we review these literatures and discuss their connection to contemporary forms of political action in relation to the economy.

Institutional Embeddedness

The institutional perspective on markets, which was first developed by political economists and later picked up by economic sociologists, maintains that the boundaries between the political and economic spheres are permeable and interdependent. Inspired by the theorist, Karl Polanyi (1944), the term "embeddedness" refers to the institutional nature of markets, which makes them akin to formal political institutions that underlie social order (Zukin and DiMaggio 1990; Krippner 2001; Beckert 2003). Markets are not naturally occurring abstractions but rather, they are institutions in their own right that reflect "a complex alchemy of politics, culture, and ideology" (Krippner 2001: 782). As economic conditions change, so too do political conditions. The two are inextricably linked.

One implication of this perspective is that as markets destabilize and produce inequities, injustices, or destroy the very resources exchanged in markets, social order also destabilizes, unleashing political and social unrest. Put another way, if the economy cannot function to serve the coordination of exchange that serves the interests of a majority of its participants, they will rebel against that system and seek political solutions that restore their desire for order.

This insight is at the core of Polanyi's monumental book, *The Great Transformation* (1944). In this book, Polanyi argues that as economies grow and use more vital resources and eventually stagnate, movements arise to draw attention to the injustices of capitalism. Polanyi (1944) referred to the rising tide of discontent against institutions as the "double movement" of capitalism. Elites enhance institutions that promote economic growth, while at the same time reformers, like movement activists, mobilize to protect society from the destructive, dehumanizing forces of the market. Order is in the balance between these two opposing forces. The driving need for economic growth and the redistribution of riches to the elites puts a target on their back, especially among those suffering from its destructive consequences.

Although Polanyi sought to explain the origins of World War II, his version of institutional theory has clear implications for explaining contemporary political behavior. Increased levels of political activity and the constant politicization of economic life may find its roots in economic institutions designed to foster unregulated growth and that ultimately destroy the environment, local economies, and traditional forms of social life. As the market proves unable to self-regulate, citizens grow perturbed and become politically activated.

Some scholars have blamed the unfettered growth of capitalism, and the failure of elites and their institutions to contain the negative externalities of neoliberalism, for creating the conditions that necessitate many modern movements (Rhodes 2012; Della Porta 2015). Jack Snyder, echoing Polanyi's argument of a double movement, diagnosed the rise of nationalism as stemming from institutional failures to contain market growth:

> [O]ver the past 30 years, liberalism has become disembedded. Elites in the United States and Europe have steadily dismantled the political controls that once allowed national governments to manage capitalism. They have constrained democratic politics to fit the logic of international markets and shifted policymaking to unaccountable bureaucracies or supra-national institutions such as the EU. This has created the conditions for the present surge of populist nationalism. (2019: 54)

The hollowing of state influence on markets has only accelerated the impact of corporate influence in every aspect of social life. Lacking strong state control, corporations and other economic organizations have become increasingly atomistic in their approach to governance, wielding tremendous influence over consumers and employees (Davis 2016; King 2017). Corporations that used to provide welfare benefits for their employees can no longer be counted on to do so (Cobb 2015). Mizruchi and others have argued that elite networks that used to align state policy with the public interest have broken down, enabling large corporations to do as they please (Mizruchi 2013; Chu and Davis 2016). Naturally, politically engaged citizens see these corporations as a threat to societal well-being, which is reflected in the types of activism they engage in (King and Pearce 2010). In short, as political institutions weaken, the market becomes increasingly destabilized, leading to unrest and increased political activity seeking to reduce the destructive consequences of an unfettered market.

Strain/Breakdown Theory

Another set of perspectives drew similar conclusions about the link between economic conditions and political engagement but did so starting with a different set of assumptions. Strain theory emphasizes the collective, psychological reactions that people have to breakdown in social order. As outlined in detail by Buechler (2004), strain theory assumed that people are generally rational, predictable actors, constrained by norms and regulated social life, but when a breakdown occurs in the normative order, emotional crowds spontaneously erupt (see also Weber and King 2014). Compared to the normatively ideal, orderly group behavior of typical times, scholars theorized crowd behavior as dangerous, irrational, and disruptive (Blumer 1939). New norms may eventually emerge from the collective behavior produced by these emotional strains but only after the irrationality of the crowd has subsided. In other words, the breakdown of order triggers an emotional wave of disruptive crowd behavior, which has the potential to transform norms and eventually cohere under a new set of social norms.

Although strain and breakdown theories declined in popularity in the 1970s as new theories depicting social movements as rational, purposeful collective action emerged, some of the core insights still have relevance for explaining changes in contemporary political activity. David Snow and colleagues (1998) sought to resuscitate strain theory by arguing that the central idea of breakdown leading to changes in political action was correct, but that earlier theorists had mis-specified the mechanisms linking breakdown and political behavior. They argue that "loss aversion" triggers collective action when order breaks down (Tversky and Kahneman 1991). The notion of loss aversion is that people are far more motivated by potential losses than they are by potential gains. Even the perception of a potential loss may ignite people to take action.

Snow and his coauthors mention two kinds of breakdown with relevance to economic conditions: disruptive events that threaten a community's existence and changes to the ability of a community to subsist. The first kind of breakdown may unite a community to fight against whatever underlies the cause of that event, especially if they perceive that the loss will change their way of life or threaten their identity or subsistence. The second type of breakdown directly shapes the economic well-being of a community and creates inequality in the distribution of resources. Groups may mobilize around political issues related to either type of threat. Examples may include environmental justice campaigns spurred by targeted, local pollution or anti-capitalist movements reacting to sudden job losses in a community. These local breakdowns may accentuate grievances and a sense of "relative deprivation" among affected communities. In this sense, the macro-contextual economic conditions, such as increasing inequality, amplify local grievances and individual perceptions of grievance with the economic system and its consequences for their lives (Grasso and Giugni 2016; Grasso, Yoxon, Karampampas, and Temple 2019).

Critics of capitalism have noted that breakdowns in order of this type seem increasingly common. Environmental destruction, increasing inequality, and the hollowing out of state infrastructure meant to protect society from such damages create strains and grievances that coalesce people into united movements. Market growth and wealth accumulation is a major source of environmental destruction contributing to the escalation of climate change (Klein 2015). As both the primary cause of carbon toxicity and the potential climate savior, corporations are at the center of political debates over environmental stewardship (Haigh and Griffiths 2007). Rather than seeking state regulation over environmental activities, increasingly business executives claim that the solution to environmental destruction depends on more corporate innovation and increased consumption of sustainable goods (Wright and Nyberg 2015). Not surprisingly, much environmental activism has shifted to engage with corporations directly, ignoring the potential role of the state altogether (Nelson and King 2020). Seeking to avoid the high costs of resolving climate change, businesses have, in turn, funded the conservative resistance in the form of "climate change denial" activism, further politicizing the issue and creating roadblocks to environmental reform (Dunlap and McCright 2011).

We see a similar dynamic with debates over income and wealth inequality. Most Americans have negative views about excessive executive compensation but they do not prefer government redistribution of wealth as a solution to inequality (McCall 2014). The implication of this resistance to government redistribution plans, in the United States at least, is that political dialogue over inequality has tended to individualize the problem and blame executives and corporate policies (see Shorrocks and Grasso 2020 for a comparative view). As governments have stepped back their role in redistributing wealth through taxation or social welfare provisions, activists have gone to companies to pressure them to change compensation practices (Carberry and Zajac 2020). Just as we see in other arenas, political engagement over issues related to inequality tends to be translated through activism against companies. Notably, the Occupy Wall Street movement, one of the most prominent instances of activism to highlight economic inequality in the United States, did not make unified policy demands, although they continually lambasted corporations and the finance industry for their role in amplifying inequality (Bellafante 2011).

In short, strain and breakdown theories may help explain the sudden emergence of new movements seeking to redress destruction and inequality associated with the secondary consequences of capitalism. Moreover, contemporary movements of this type often trigger countermovements led by elites who benefit from the very forms of production that sustain ongoing breakdown.

Threat and Competition Theories

Another set of theories emphasized competition over resources and how this might impact political behavior. The economy is a background to this competition inasmuch as markets are the primary way that people and communities obtain needed resources. As communities cohere around particular identities and ways of life, they begin to value their own group's well-being over those of others and this leads to perceived zero-sum competition between those groups over scarce resources.

One of the ways in which in this politicization dynamic manifests itself is in ethnic and racial competition. Olzak (1994) demonstrated that as ethnic competition in labor markets increases, rates of ethnic violence go up as well. She asserts that this is due to intensified collective action among ethnic groups that believe they are threatened by new competition. Thus, when labor markets are desegregated, ethnic violence often follows. Competition over scarce resources is by no means limited to ethnic movements. Scholars have observed that competition shapes the ability of movement organizations to thrive and even relates to people's willingness to engage in political causes (e.g., McCarthy and Zald 1977; Minkoff 1997). For example, one study showed that during lean economic times generalist movement organizations thrive, often at the expense of specialist organizations given the limited resources available (Soule and King 2008).

Status is one type of resource that fuels competition between groups and that affects political engagement. Status competition occurs when groups struggle to attain higher levels of prestige relative to other groups (Gusfield 1986). Attaining greater status recognition enables groups to secure other valuable resources, like job opportunities, and limit other groups' access to those same resources. Weber (1968) referred to this process of status-related resource hoarding as closure.

Examples of how status competition drives political activity include the resurfacing of anti-immigrant, nativist activism (Estep 2017), the origin of moral reform movements (McVeigh, Crubaugh, and Estep 2017), and the appearance of racist political movements like the Klu Klux Klan (Owens, Cunningham, and Ward 2015). McVeigh (1999) has argued that status competition of this type is often associated with a perception that one group experiences "power devaluation" relative to the other groups. In an effort to restore power and its privileges, groups politically mobilize to institute rules that disenfranchise their competitors and undermine the group's ability to compete in labor markets. McVeigh asserts that a great deal of racist political activity is motivated by perceived competition and associated threats to that group's power.

One implication of competition perspectives is that the threat of competition increases as economic conditions worsen. Economic recessions and industry declines can aggravate relations between ethnic or racial communities, leading to new waves of political activity (Polavieja 2016). Ethnic competition does not just lead to spikes of racial violence, like lynchings, but it can also influence political leaders to incorporate racist rhetoric and policies into their political agendas (Olzak 1994; McVeigh and Estep 2019), thereby shaping the kinds of choices that citizens face at the voting booth.

The Economy and Forms of Political Participation

Theories about institutional embeddedness, strain and breakdown, and threat and competition all point to a similar implication: as the economic conditions of a country, region, or community worsen and affect their well-being, people politicize the economy. Institutional theory suggests that in this condition, people collectively turn against the state and blame it for the mishandling of the economy. They may seek to alter institutional arrangements in an attempt to align governance mechanisms with their cultural ideals of what the market should look like, and in some situations may even seek solutions that transcend the state's influence on the market (Fligstein 2001). Strain and breakdown theories suggest that people may rebel against institutions of all types and seek other remedies for the restoration of order and alleviation of their grievances, including turning to corporate actors as agents of change. Threat and competition theories indicate that economic conditions may lead to political fragmentation that spark new movements that pit one group against another, inciting political conflict and, in some cases, violence.

Research on the effects of economic crises on political activity support the idea that economic crisis has had an impact on people's political participation; however, it does so in conflicting ways. On the one hand, as economic conditions worsen, people become less trusting of government and become less engaged in formal politics. But on the other hand, as deteriorating economic conditions translate into increased inter-group competition, people become more polarized and more motivated to engage in politics in order to withhold power from rival groups.

Evidence suggests that worsening economic conditions has deleterious effects on more traditional forms of political engagement. States and countries with greater income inequality tend to have worse voter turnout (Galbraith and Hale 2008), and their citizens have less interest in political issues and lower rates of political involvement (Solt 2008). Further, as economic conditions worsen and inequality increases, people are less trusting of government institutions, leading to weakened demand for redistributive policies (Macdonald 2019). In short, market tendencies to increase inequality are a major contributing factor to citizens' disengagement from voting and traditional politics.

One recent study shows, however, that economic crisis and its consequences for the poorest citizens may stimulate unconventional forms of politics, like protest, even while it depresses formal political engagement. In an analysis of citizens surveyed in nine European countries, they found that individuals were more likely to protest and engage in other unconventional political tactics when they experienced relative economic deprivation, but being economically deprived had the opposite effect for more conventional types of political participation, like voting (Grasso et al. 2019). Moreover, they found a greater tendency for the economically aggrieved to protest when macroeconomic conditions were worse. Economic crisis accentuates perceptions of deprivation, which in turn leads citizens to engage in protests and other disruptive political tactics.

Other studies point out that as economic conditions worsen and income inequality widens, citizens become increasingly polarized on political issues (Garand 2010). This polarization, some experts have observed, increasingly takes the form of "political sectarianism," in which people debate less over ideas or values and instead conflict over which side wins, regardless of the ideological coherence of their ideas (Finkel et al. 2020). Sectarianism of this type may even increase voter turnout because each side is motivated to ensure that their side wins, as we saw in the last US election, which had one of the highest voter turnout rates in the last century (Schaul, Rabinowitz, and Mellnik 2020). Some of this polarization-led turnout seems to be motivated by race-based economic competition. Baccini and Weymouth (2021) found that White voters were more likely to support Republican presidential candidates and Black voters were more likely to support Democratic presidential candidates in areas with more manufacturing layoffs. Both racial groups interpreted layoffs as a threat to their community's well-being and turned to the party they believed would be most supportive of their group's upward mobility in the face of economic crisis. Thus, as economic conditions worsen, it becomes increasingly likely that groups will flock to parties that promise to support their power, status, and survival as communities.

But yet another response to economic breakdown is that citizens seek solutions outside of formal political institutions. One of the main lessons of embeddedness and breakdown theories is that when people perceive that institutions can no longer produce sustainable societal and economic conditions, they will try to reimagine alternative institutions that restabilize order. A primary way in which these tendencies have been expressed is through social movement activism. Historically, political science and sociology have focused on state-focused activism as a means to shape economic conditions. This can include activists pushing for regulatory changes at the macroeconomic level, such as reducing economic inequality and opening up economic opportunity, by focusing on specific policies around taxes, the social safety net, and economic development (e.g., Amenta, Carruthers, and Zylan 1992). State-focused activism can also involve pushing for new laws to regulate corporate behavior (e.g., Dobbin 2009).

However, since the 1960s, as state capture by corporations and deregulation have intensified, and the power of labor unions, the traditional counterweight to corporate power, has declined, activists mobilized by economic crises, inequality, and unethical corporate behavior have increasingly turned to what has become known as "private politics," that is, targeting corporations directly (Baron 2003; Soule 2009). Globalization has also accelerated this turn because of the absence of a unitary global state that activists can target.

Although a smaller proportion of the population participate in anti-corporate activism, it represents an increasingly important example of attempts by citizens to exert control over their lives in the face of changing economic conditions when they sense that governments are failing to do so. Activism in the marketplace itself has also become an important voice calling for remedies to the destructive capacity of markets on society. The dramatic expansion of anti-corporate and market-based activism over the last two decades has generated a rich literature by sociologists and organizational theorists examining the complex interactions between movements and corporations (King and Pearce 2010). Our current theories for explaining the relationship between the economy and political engagement, whether focused on institutional embeddedness, strain and breakdown, or threat and competition, have yet to incorporate these new forms of political engagement sparked by the behavior of corporations, the primary economic actor in contemporary capitalist societies. Although, a unified theoretical framework has yet to emerge in the sociology and organizational theory literature examining this new form of political engagement, it has generated important insights for scholars interested in the relationship between the economy and political participation. We now turn to examining this literature in more detail.

ACTIVISTS AND CORPORATIONS: NEW FORMS OF POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE CAPITALIST ECONOMY

Generally, anti-corporate activists target firms that behave in socially irresponsible ways, encompassing a broad range of issues relating to the economic, social, and physical consequences of corporations, including labor conditions in global supply chains (Bartley 2007), executive compensation (Carberry and Zajac 2020), human rights (Soule 2009), LGBT rights (Briscoe and Safford, 2008), structural racism (Seidman, 2003), and climate change (Carberry et al., 2019). A diverse group of societal actors engage in anti-corporate activism, employing a range of political tactics. Often, these efforts generate counter-mobilization efforts by the targeted corporations that can have profound implications on the success of activist efforts to transform corporations and economic conditions more broadly. In this section, we take a closer look at the types of activists, their tactics, and corporate counter-mobilization efforts.

Political Actors and Targets

Activism is frequently sparked and channeled by social movement organizations (SMOs), which are typically nonprofit organizations committed to raising awareness and engaging in political action around specific issues. But as political participation has blended into the economy, the distinction between members of SMOs and their allies within workplaces and other market venues has blurred. Inasmuch as the corporation is itself a target of political ire by activists, many of those most politically engaged are employees, shareholders, and other "primary stakeholders" of the companies they have targeted for change (Vasi and King, 2012; see also Santoro and McGuire, 1997 on "institutional activists").

Briscoe and Gupta (2016) have usefully categorized anti-corporate activists along a spectrum from insiders to outsiders, based on the extent to which activists are dependent on the targeted corporation for resources and their knowledge of the corporation, e.g., employees. In contrast, outsiders have lower levels of resource dependency and knowledge, but include a broader range of actors, such as consumers, movement organizations, and individual members of society. In practice, anti-corporate movements are often made up of a diverse group of different actors who can come together for one focused campaign or engage in ongoing activism in which the network of actors ebbs and flows in reaction to internal movement dynamics, changes in the behavior of corporations, and shifting political and cultural tides, such as in the ongoing movement against high levels of executive compensation (Carberry and Zajac, 2020).

In terms of targets, the most common for activists seeking changes in corporate practices and policies are corporations that are engaged in unethical or destructive behavior. Not all corporate targets are created equally however. Activists often target higher profile firms (King, 2011; King and McDonnell, 2015; Bartley and Child, 2014) and those who have been more receptive to activist demands over time (McDonnell et al., 2015). Activists also target entire industries, which often cohere into distinct fields of political action comprised of common practices, shared norms, and specific regulations (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012). Anti-corporate activists also continue to focus on the traditional target of the state, pushing for the passage of new regulations (Schneiberg and Soule, 2005). When governments are not supportive of movement goals, activists have pushed for the creation of private certification systems (Lee, 2009) and regulatory institutions (Bartley, 2007, Mena and Weager, 2014).

As Soule (2009) observed, the lines between the public politics of the state and the private politics of corporations are often blurred as activists often target both the state and corporations at the same time (Hiatt et al. 2015). Beyond the distinct targets of corporations, industries, and the state, anti-corporate activists have also engaged in efforts to change cultural attitudes and values regarding specific issues, such as climate change (Hoffman 2015). Ultimately, changes in cultural attitudes and values can lead to more gradual, long-term shifts in corporate practices as stakeholders embrace new values and pressure firms to change (Carberry et al. 2019).

New Tactics of Political Engagement

In terms of tactics of political engagement spurred by the economic consequences of corporations, insider activists are less likely to engage in highly visible and disruptive tactics for fear of retaliation by their employers. Meyerson and Scully (1995) coined the term "tempered radicals" to describe the unique position of employee activists, who challenge organizational practices and policies, but often do so in ways that do not threaten their continued employment (DeCelles, Sonenshein, and King 2020; Katzenstein 1998). Although insiders may be constrained in the types of tactics they can use, insider activists have more in-depth knowledge about the organization's leadership, policies, practices, informal networks, and culture (Briscoe and Gupta 2016). In contrast, since outsider activists are less dependent on the targeted corporation, they are more able and likely to engage in confrontational and disruptive tactics, such as protests and boycotts (e.g., King and Soule 2007; King 2008). A primary outsider strategy is for activists to "name and shame" corporations, using different tactics to draw attention to corporate behavior and threaten the offender's reputation (Bartley and Child 2014). Such tactics can include boycotts, protests, media campaigns, political theater, and sabotage. Beyond naming and shaming, outside activists can also engage in less confrontational tactics, including social media campaigns, direct dialogue with corporate leaders, and advocacy science (Soule 2009).

Although the distinction between insiders and outsiders is analytically useful, other scholarship has highlighted the complex relationships and overlapping identities of these two groups. Weber et al. (2009), for example, uncovered the complex ways in which outside activists were able to penetrate corporate boardrooms to disrupt existing coalitions of elite insiders and influence the extent to which German pharmaceutical firms commercialized biotechnology innovations. More recently, insider activism has emerged among white-collar workers at technology giants such as Google, Microsoft, and Amazon, focusing on issues relating to inequality, human rights, and climate change, and working closely with outside SMOs (Gautam and Carberry 2020).

The distinction between insiders and outsiders is becoming more difficult to disentangle as the economy moves more decisively to a diverse range of non-standard employment arrangements. Lower-paid employees working in the gig economy continue to be dependent on their employers, which may temper their activism, but their lack of good wages, benefits, and job security may drive them to disruptive activism. Although more highly skilled contractors are not as dependent on the corporations that hire them, when economic conditions worsen, they may be in a similar position as lower-wage employees. To the extent that non-standard employment arrangements less closely resemble employment in traditional corporations, activism by these employees may more closely resemble and collaborate with activists targeting the state.

Scholars are only beginning to attend to the complex ways in which changes to the employment relationship will affect the dynamics of anti-corporate activism and political engagement more broadly (e.g., DeCelles et al. 2020; Buchter 2021). As new evidence emerges of the impact of movement insiders, the limitations of traditional theories, including those discussed at the beginning of the chapter, become apparent. Even though insiders are ideologically linked to the broader movement, it is apparent that their motivations and constraints are quite different. Future scholarship will continue to investigate and more deeply theorize how political expression unfolds in settings like the workplace.

Intermediary Roles of Media, Investors, and Consumers

Anti-corporate activists do not work alone in their efforts at political engagement with corporations, especially inasmuch as they rely on intermediaries, like the media, investors, and consumers. The media play a complex role, both broadcasting the claims of outside SMOs and activists about economic conditions, and sometimes functioning as activists themselves in how they frame the issues and attention they give to them (King and Soule 2007; King 2008, 2011; Carberry and King 2012). More disruptive and confrontational tactics usually attract more media attention for the grievances of activists (Earl, Martin, Soule, and McCarthy 2004). As movement tactics receive more media coverage, their targets face more intense reputational pressure to concede to the demands of activists (King 2008).

Investors occupy an intermediate space between internal and external activists, with some dependence on and knowledge about the targeted corporation (Vasi and King 2012; Briscoe and Gupta 2016). Politically engaged investors have a number of formal and informal pathways of influence, including voting in elections for boards of directors, filing and voting on shareholder resolutions, engaging in direct dialogue with corporate leaders, filing lawsuits, and conducting media campaigns. Although the empirical research has demonstrated that shareholder activists have only been effective at motivating incremental changes in corporate practices (Carberry and King 2012; Ertimur et al. 2011) and establishing pathways for activist engagement (McDonnell et al. 2015), they are the only type of activist that has some formal role in corporate governance through their ability to vote for corporate boards who set corporate strategy and on shareholder resolutions that often aim to alter the broader economic impacts of corporations.

Another critical intermediary through which anti-corporate activism is channeled is the consumer. Boycotts explicitly seek to activate consumer choice in pressuring businesses to meet activists' demands, and there are salient examples of boycotts that have mobilized consumers en masse sufficiently to do material damage to their targets (Luders 2006). However, it is unclear if the majority of boycotts are successful in shaping consumer behavior at all (King 2008). Nevertheless, in recent years consumer choice has become an important means of political engagement. "Political consumerism" emerged as a means of activating citizens to "vote with the dollar" and not just at the ballot box (Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti 2005; Dubuisson-Quellier 2013). Social media has been key to this strategy, giving people a platform to express their personal brands through politically conscious consumption (Bennett 2012). As social media has risen in importance to a new generation of citizens, activists have used consumer choices as a way to connect to people's sense of individuality and provide them with a means of unique civic and political expression (De Zúñiga, Copeland, and Bimber 2014). As a form of lifestyle politics, political consumerism seems especially prevalent among young people and is not highly correlated with more traditional forms of political engagement, such as donating to political campaigns (Sandovici and Davis 2010).

Corporate Counter-Mobilization as Political Participation

Not surprisingly, as activists have embraced private political engagement with corporations, the latter have developed strategic responses. In the past, when governmental intervention was the main form of political pressure experienced by corporations, they developed strategies, based in lobbying and campaign donations, that sought to exert influence on politicians and regulatory agencies (Hillman and Hitt 1999). As corporations become pulled into the political fray by activists, they have evolved as a new kind of political actor. No longer are corporations and their elites solely working behind the scenes of government to promote policies that benefit them; they are now front and center in political interactions in social media and making their voices heard through their employees and taking more proactive political stances. That is, corporations' political engagement seems to mirror that of their activist antagonists.

Although the research on this topic is still developing, we argue that there are two primary types of corporate political engagement that have emerged. The first is reactive inasmuch as corporations want to protect themselves from the reputational and material threats generated by activists. The defensive tactics companies use have included the adoption of practices as a reputational shield (Carberry and King 2012; McDonnell et al. 2015), repression of activists (Walker, Martin, and McCarthy 2008), "astroturf" organizing (Walker 2014), making prosocial claims after being targeted by boycotts (McDonnell and King 2013), and retaliating against insider activists (Hauser 2020; Raeburn 2004). The second type is proactive, such as when corporations present themselves as socially and politically responsible actors, or support progressive policies unrelated to a company's core operations (Chatterji and Toffel 2019), Finally, Hiatt, Carlos, and Sine 2018) demonstrated that firms seek to establish relationships with a variety of political stakeholders as economic and political uncertainty increases, illustrating that companies must proactively manage their political environment to enhance their reputation and viability.

Considering the increasingly sophisticated ways in which firms engage in counter-mobilization tactics, scholars are now starting to emphasize the importance of interactionist approaches that examine the strategic behaviors of both political activists and their targets (Jasper and King 2020). Clearly, if more political engagement occurs through direct interactions with corporations and other economic actors, the perspectives of political scientists and sociologists must incorporate the corporation as a politically engaged actor in its own right.

Theoretical Implications of New Forms of Political Participation

Theoretically, research on these new forms of political engagement sparked by economic conditions has drawn upon and brought together parallel literatures in political sociology on state-focused activism and organizational research on the interactions between activists and corporations in market settings. Over the last decade, a set of complementary, meta-theoretical frameworks within organizational theory have emerged that take structure, culture, and politically motivated action seriously, including field theory (Fligstein and McAdam 2012), organization-centered constructionism (Lawrence and Phillips 2019), the institutional logics approach (Lee and Lounsbury 2015), and relational inequality theory (Tomaskovic-Devey and Avent-Holt 2019). These frameworks share a common view of the corporation and market as sites of ongoing contestation and political conflict, and have implications for how scholars in other disciplines think about political participation, particularly in relation to the economy.

At the most fundamental level, these different approaches offer a sociological view of individual political action as ongoing and occurring within a variety of institutional settings and fields in which actors are embedded, including work, family, community, and the economy. Each of these distinct fields are constituted by a network of actors, structure of power, and cultural values and norms, and actors within each of them engage in ongoing political action to secure resources, status, and power (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). This view illuminates the complex ways in which political participation in response to economic conditions occurs through informal interactions and struggles over power within a diverse range of fields. Political participation, seen in this light, is anchored in and fundamental to the daily life of actors. Much political activity resembles the kind of political participation that we commonly consider as social movement activism, but other kinds of activity, such as political consumerism, is more expressive and lacks the kind of coordination we are accustomed to seeing in movements. Political participation, therefore, is not just about participating in the political system through the formal channels of electoral politics or the informal channels of activism targeting the state or corporations. Political participation also occurs through individual actions central to daily life and that are most meaningful to human experience, such as through work and participating in the economy.

Conclusion

We began the chapter discussing how the economy and politics are intertwined. As economic conditions worsen and introduce strains in politics and the broader culture, people will seek ways to alleviate those strains and restore order and predictability to their economic and social lives. Moreover, economic inequality, job losses, and other economic events that affect communities' well-being may trigger competition between groups that lead to surges of intergroup conflict, such as racial violence. Increasingly, citizens grow concerned about the consequences of market growth on the environment and the impact this will have on nations and communities' long term well-being. Not surprisingly, many instances of contemporary political engagement reflect grievances that are rooted in economic causes. We argued that theories about institutional embeddedness, strain and breakdown, and competition continue to give us insights into the economic antecedents of political participation.

But our chapter also highlights the limitations of past theories for explaining the various forms of political participations we have seen emerge in the last couple of decades. Capitalism is constantly evolving with the changing demands of those dependent on it for survival and basic functioning. As markets expand globally and the negative consequences of this expansion become more serious, forms of political participation have evolved as well. Perhaps the most significant change resulting from this political development is the emergence of corporations and other businesses as political actors in their own right. They are no longer mere repositories of elite interests and instead represent their own interests, including need for survival, growth, and domination. In an era when democratic participation was the primary means of political expression, corporations followed suit and sought to influence political outcomes through lobbying and donating to politicians. Although those strategies have not disappeared, corporations have evolved to keep up with the strategies and tactics used by engaged citizens. Thus, their political influence is as omnipresent and serpentine as ever.

As corporations rise in their global reach as political actors, it follows that they increasingly become the targets of politically active citizens as well. As people seek to redress grievances rooted in economic shifts, they not only turn to the state as a mediator but they also seek to directly engage with corporations. Political engagement has moved outside of formal politics and increasingly into the realm of the market. Thus, another significant change in forms of political expression is the increasing politicization of the workplace and investor class. Employees and investors not only see the market as a place to secure resources, they see it as a location to express their political convictions and to redress grievances rooted in economic injustices. The challenge facing mere citizens is how they can continue to be politically engaged even as corporations continue to evolve their own increasingly sophisticated forms of political engagement. The market and workplace will continue to not only be centers of everyday experience but also platforms of political expression.

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PART VI

DETERMINANTS

CHAPTER 32

AGE, GENERATION, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

LAURA SERRA AND KAAT SMETS

WHY does age matter? Age has long been considered one of the key determinants of political participation, underpinning differences in turnout patterns, but also in alternative forms of participation and the values that direct political beliefs and behaviors. Although age-based differences in participation are a commonly remarked upon feature of political behavior, these have become all the more apparent and relevant in recent years. If on the one hand there have been significant falls in the turnout levels of younger cohorts, there has also been an increase in alternative forms of participation, from protesting to engagement in social media campaigns and social movements (see, e.g., Grasso 2018). Moreover, differences in opinion across age groups have taken a central role in explaining voting outcomes, from the EU referendum to recent presidential and general elections in the US and the UK. Leading scholars and polling agencies alike consider age one of the most distinctive cleavages of modern voting behavior (Erk 2017; Ipsos MORI 2017; YouGov 2019; Curtice 2020). These dynamics are present to varying extents across Western democracies (see, e.g., Garcia-Albacete 2014), and this chapter therefore looks at them with a comparative focus.

WHEN DO WE START DEVELOPING POLITICAL ORIENTATIONS, AND WHERE DO THESE COME FROM?

The Impressionable or Formative Years

The formation of political attitudes, political engagement and, ultimately, political behaviors is believed to be a life-long process that begins at a young age (Hess and Torney 1967; Easton and Dennis 1969; Niemi and Jennings 1981; Rekker et al. 2017). Research has shown that already at primary school age, children are able to identify political problems and display political orientations (Van Deth et al. 2011; Bartels and Jackman 2014). That said, most researchers agree that the period between childhood and adulthood (i.e., the teenage and early adulthood years) is especially important for political learning and the development of political attitudes and behaviors (see, e.g., Jennings 1979; Highton and Wolfinger 2001; Kinder 2006; Abdelzadeh and Lundberg 2017). The so-called impressionable or formative years are considered crucial (Mannheim 1952), because at this young age people do not yet have set political attitudes and habits. This means young people are more open to external influences, such as personal, social, cultural, political, and historical experiences (Alwin and Krosnick 1991; Flanagan and Sherrod 1998; Sears and Levy 2003).

The exact boundaries of the impressionable years are contested and thought to vary based on the phenomenon under study. Research has shown that the crucial period for establishing behavioral patterns lies somewhere between the ages of 17 and 25 (Niemi and Jennings 1981; Erikson et al. 2002). Nonetheless, both a clear definition and operationalization of the impressionable years are lacking, and political learning is certainly not confined to these adolescent and early adulthood years. Focussing on party identification, Bartels and Jackman (2014) found that young people are especially sensitive to political events between the ages of 7 and 17, whilst Ghitza and Gelman (2014) estimate that formative experiences in relation to voting preferences peak at 15 to 16 years and at 21 to 22 years.

Children may thus be socialized into politics already at a very young age, which implies that researchers should refrain from focusing exclusively on those about to or having reached the minimum voting age. At the same time, there is evidence that the period of political learning nowadays is extended, and that the upper bound of the impressionable years should be brought up. Bhatti and Hansen (2012), for example, show that turnout drops after the first voting experience and that only by the time citizens reach the age of 35 turnout levels bounce back to those recorded at the age of 18. This can be linked to the theoretical expectation that life-cycle events experienced during early adulthood influence the development of political interest and political participation (Neundorf, Smets, and García-Albacete 2013), and the observation that the transition to adulthood increasingly takes place later in life (Iacovou 2002; Council of Europe 2005; Smets 2016).

Socializing Agents

As is well known, the development of political orientations and behaviors in the early years is largely thought to be caused by external factors such as personal relations and sociopolitical context (see also Anne Muxel in Chapter 40 in this volume on Socialization). The literature on political socialization identifies several so-called socializing agents, most notably parents, (civic) education, peers, (social) media, and the political context.

Since young people spend a lot of time with their *parents*, it is not surprising that early research on socializing agents focused on parent–child transmission of political attitudes and behaviors (see Taylor, Peplau, and Sears 1994; Campbell et al. 1960; Jennings and Niemi 1974; Kroh and Selb 2009 on party identification; Percheron and Jennings 1981; Iyengar et al. 2018 on ideology; Hatemi and Ojeda 2020 on values; and Beck and Jennings 1982; Quintelier 2015; Gidengil et al. 2016; Dahlgaard 2018 on political participation). Parents exert political influence both directly through political discussion in the family home (Jennings and Niemi 1968; Beck and Jennings 1982) and acting as role models (e.g., Kandel and Andrews 1987; Dryler 1998), and indirectly through their socioeconomic status (SES), which is passed on to children and can contribute to class-specific orientations (Verba, Schlozman and Burns 2005; Jennings, Stoker, and Bowers 2009).

Education is also considered an important socializing agent through the imparting of knowledge and cognitive skills (e.g., Dalton 2009). However, some argue that education is simply a proxy for social class and cognitive ability (Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996; Denny and Doyle 2008; Campbell 2009; Persson 2015; see also Evans and Hepplewhite in Chapter 34 on Social Class and Education). The role of civic education on political orientations and participation is also contested. The long-held belief that civic education and the curriculum more broadly had almost no influence at all on students' attitudes (Langton and Jennings 1968) has been under fire for decades (Niemi and Junn 2005; Nie and Hillygus 2001). The mechanisms through which schooling influences students' political orientations, however, remains unclear. Empirical research has looked at the influence of civics instruction itself (i.e., learning about politics, government, and citizenship) (Campbell and Niemi 2016), but also at specific features of the class (e.g., lectures, class discussion, group work, etc.) (Hooghe and Dassonneville 2011; Dassonneville et al. 2012) and the climate of the classroom and school (i.e., how free students feel to express their opinions and have them discussed and respected, but also on school authority policy regimes) (Torney-Purta 2002; Bruch and Soss 2018).

In school, but also outside, young people interact with *peers*. Peer-to-peer transmission of attitudes is thought to take place through political discussion (see e.g., Shehata and Amnå 2019). In addition, children are mobilized to participate in politics by their peers or by group norms (Tedin 1980). Of course, nowadays transmission of peer cultures largely takes place via (social) media (Edgerly et al. 2018). Research on the mobilizing effects of new social media shows that these networks tend to be homophilic and that citizens mostly interact with people who have similar ideological preferences and political views (Barberá 2015; Barberá et al. 2015). The extent of this is mediated by one's political orientations (Boutyline and Willer 2017) as well as personal circumstances and the nature of one's online network (Vaccari et al. 2016).

Political events, finally, affect political attitudes and behaviors by shaping a context that is more likely to leave an imprint on younger citizens who have not yet developed stable political habits (Franklin 2004; Grasso 2016; Grasso et al. 2019). The years in which voters enter the electorate are argued to be highly consequential, with short-term characteristics of elections such as electoral competition being of particular influence (Smets and Neundorf 2014). As voters come of age at times when different parties are successful and different issues are salient, they can be characterized as forming more or less distinct political generations (Mannheim 1952). Their long-standing preferences may therefore reflect the dominant political forces present during the period when they came of political age (Tilley and Evans 2014).

How Enduring are Political Orientations throughout the Lifespan?

Habit vs. Lifelong Plasticity

There is general agreement in the literature that early life experiences form the basis for political attitudes, political engagement, and ultimately political behaviors. An important implication of this strand of research is the assumption that these early experiences produce relatively enduring orientations towards politics (e.g., Easton and Dennis 1969). When it comes to voting, studies have indeed found that early voting experiences have a long-term effect in shaping future voting profiles, both in terms of turnout (e.g., Plutzer 2002; Franklin 2004; Dinas 2012) and vote choice (e.g., Tilley 2002).

Other scholars, however, argue for lifelong plasticity based on the idea that citizens update their preferences and behavior as they go through the life span, experience important life events, and react to the performance of governments and opposition parties on a number of policy areas (Marsh 1971; Alwin and Krosnick 1991).

To juxtapose these two competing hypotheses empirically, Bartels and Jackman (2014) developed a mathematical model estimating opinion change as the result of both the political shocks experienced through life, and of the weight given to these shocks as people age. Their estimates indicate that an individual's opinion at any given time is the average of past political experiences, and they find little evidence that recent events or early adulthood experiences have disproportional weight.

Aging, Cohort and Period Effects

Scholars seeking to evaluate the role of age in political participation, do so by looking at the relative effects of aging, cohorts, and periods. *Aging effects* refer to changes that are associated with progression through the life-cycle as social roles change with age, or as the accumulation of social experiences increases (Binstock and Quadagno 2001). This may influence and alter individuals' political orientations through the impact these changes have on the resources available to them (Stoker and Jennings 1995; Flanagan et al. 2012). These effects can also manifest themselves through psychological changes relating to values and preferences. For example, aging has—theoretically at least—been linked to increased conservatism, authoritarianism, and long-term attitude stability indicative of a resistance to change (Cornelis et al. 2009).

Generational or cohort effects, on the other hand, determine how citizens might differ in their political attitudes because of different socialization experiences that manifest themselves in their behavior and belief system (e.g., Dinas and Stoker 2014; Grasso et al. 2019). These generational or cohort effects are defined as enduring inter-cohort distinctions that are attributable to the common "imprinting" of cohort members, and are presumed to be the result of said members having shared similar socializing experiences. Generational effects can be attributed to two distinct sources of influence: (1) long-term processes leading, for example, to increasing social liberalism among younger cohorts (Inglehart 1971); and (2) the political, historical, and cultural context in the period when people enter the electorate (Schuman and Scott 1989).

Period effects regulate how attitudes or behavior might be a function of the current political, economic, or societal situation, and idiosyncratic events that produce fluctuations over time and affect all age groups simultaneously (Beck and Jennings 1991). Not only events such as economic crises and war, but also drastic changes to a party's outlook, can be specific to the period an election takes place and affect all voters regardless of age or societal position.

Importantly, age, period, and cohort effects are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they have all been found to play a part in determining political behavior, albeit to different extents. The three areas where they become particularly evident are turnout, alternative forms of participation, and political values, which are reviewed in the following section.

CONVENTIONAL AND UNCONVENTIONAL FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

Turnout

The conventional way to participate in politics is through voting in elections. Aging effects in turnout suggest a curvilinear relationship whereby participation increases with age and then falls towards the late stages of life, as displayed in Figure 32.1 for voters in Europe.

This inverted U-shape can be explained by the political life-cycle theory, according to which participation levels are low for young people due to their low attachment to civic life (Putnam 2000). Participation levels then rise as people make the transition to adulthood and experience life events such as leaving the family home, starting a job, buying a house, and getting married (e.g., Stoker and Jennings 1995). These processes are associated with activities (involvement in organizations, associations, the community, etc.) that tend to enhance political participation due to increased motivation, mobilization, skills, and pressure (Lane 1959; Kinder 2006). Participation is believed to then fall again for the older age groups as they undergo health problems, retirement, or declining incomes, and become politically alienated (e.g., Goerres 2007; Burden et al. 2017). In sum, changes in participation throughout the lifespan do not occur merely because of getting older, rather they do so through the life experiences that come with age.

Generational effects in turnout, on the other hand, concern the impact of the political context on the development of generational turnout patterns under the assumption that cohorts who grew up in a highly politicized context would have a higher propensity to turn out to vote. In this respect Smets and Neundorf (2014) find that general turnout levels and

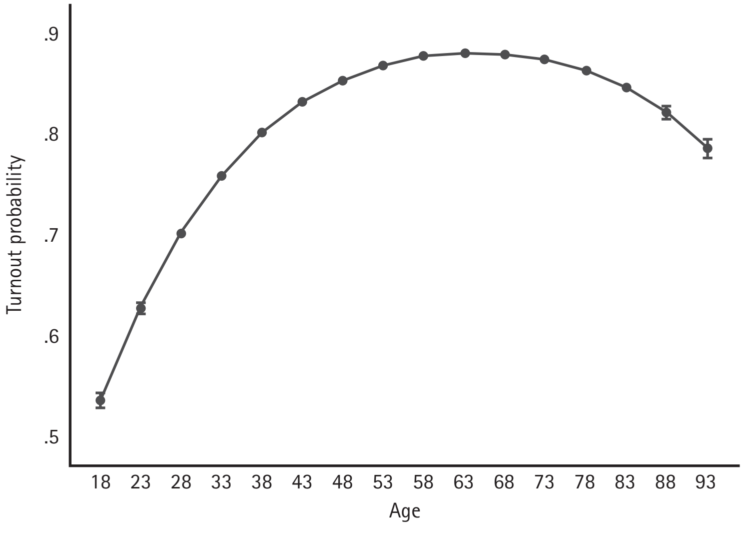

FIGURE 32.1 Turnout Probability by Age. European Social Survey (ESS) Rounds 1-9

Authors' own elaboration.

polarization do in fact contribute to varying turnout patterns across generations. However, they also find that it is differences in socioeconomic backgrounds that explain the largest share of variation in inter-cohort turnout levels.

What we see then is an interaction between life-cycle effects and generational effects as socioeconomic markers impact different generations to different extents. As educational and occupational patterns change, so does the timing of the life events that determine specific participation patterns. This has resulted in a widening age gap in the turnout levels of young and older citizens in a number of countries (Blais et al. 2004; Smets 2012). Explanations for this trend point to changing social circumstances, transition journeys to "adult statuses," and unique events experienced by young people that undermine their ability to participate or prevent them from knowing how to do so. For instance, Smets (2016) finds that decreasing turnout levels in Britain can in part be explained by the delayed maturation of the youth, who do not experience formative events at the same points in life as previous generations did, and are therefore less well equipped to participate to the same extent.

Alternative Forms of Participation

Alternative, unconventional, or non-institutionalized forms of participation in politics comprise protest activities such as demonstrating, signing petitions, or boycotting certain products or companies for political reasons. These actions have traditionally been associated with young people, who have often been found to prefer them to more traditional methods of political expression (Norris 2003; Torney-Purta and Amadeo 2003; Sloam 2014; Grasso 2016). Rather than being apathetic or uninterested in politics, as suggested by their low turnout levels, some believe the choice to engage in unconventional activities is a deliberate decision in line with the youth's understanding of political efficacy (O'Toole et al. 2003).

The extent to which young people are indeed most likely to participate in non-traditional activities, however, has become the subject of debate. For example, a comprehensive study of young people's political participation by García-Albacete (2014) looks at generational changes across Western Europe and finds that young people are just as likely to choose alternative forms of participation as their older counterparts. In some cases, such as in the UK and Switzerland, they are even less likely to engage in these activities than older age groups. Therefore, although young people do prefer non-institutional actions to traditional modes of participation, they do not engage in those to a significantly larger extent than other age groups.

Scholars have therefore begun considering whether non-traditional participation is perhaps better understood in terms of generational trends. In a comprehensive study on the development and makeup of protest action, Giugni and Grasso (2019) demonstrate that in most of the European countries they examine, the 1960s–1970s generation and the generation that came of age in the crisis-ridden 2000s are the two most active political generations. Their results thus strongly suggest that when it comes to unconventional participation, it is the political context of socialization that impacts participation patterns, and that the effect of this socialization tends to linger throughout the life span (e.g., Edmunds and Turner 2005; Milkman 2017).

The Influence of Political Values on Participation

A further drive behind age-based differences in political activism, and one that is often overlooked in studies of participation, concerns values. Values can have important consequences on political behavior insofar that they determine vote choice, as well as influence whether someone is more or less likely to take part in less conventional means of political expression (Grasso and Giugni 2018, see also Chapter 37 by Heath, Richards, and Jungblut on Political Values and Political Participation).

Aging effects in value change posit that people become more conservative as they age because of the increased responsibilities they have taken on, which make them less altruistic and more self-centered. Moreover, older people are believed to be resistant to change and therefore more likely to reject progressive values. This stereotype persists despite extensive research proving that old people are just as likely as their younger counterparts to change their mind on political matters (Glenn 1974; Danigelis et al. 2007).

Generational effects, on the other hand, suggest that values are formed early in life, are influenced by the sociopolitical context in which citizens become socialized, and remain relatively stable throughout the life-span (Mannheim 1952). For example, Grasso et al. (2019) demonstrate how the protracted period of Conservative governance in Britain between 1979 and 1997 created a political generation that adopted conservative economic values, such as negative views of the welfare state, despite their age and in contrast with previous generations.

Aside from the political context, inter-generational value change can also be triggered by long-term processes that alter society at large. One of the first accounts of this dynamic was provided by Inglehart (1971), who noted that increased economic prosperity had made citizens less concerned with economic issues and more interested in "post-materialist" values such as gender equality, minority rights, and tolerance towards different life-styles. As older, more materialist citizens pass away and are continuously replaced by younger, less materialist ones, generational replacement tends to lead to a gradual decline in the proportion of materialists and to a gradual growth in the proportion of postmaterialists (Inglehart and Abramson 1994). Therefore, generational replacement is generally considered to be a key process driving social and political change.

Figure 32.2 illustrates the age gap in the tendency to hold social liberal values across the most advanced industrial democracies in North America, Europe, and Oceania since the 1990s. The social liberal values scale includes a number of indicators designed by Welzel (2013) to measure value positions—in this case views on abortion, LGBT rights, and gender equality. Values above zero indicate support for socially liberal positions, while values below zero indicate little to no support.

As evidenced by Figure 32.2 there has been a consistent age gap between the older and younger groups in society on these issues. Yet this age gap has narrowed significantly in recent years as older people have moved towards more progressive positions, which suggests that generational replacement is in fact the driver behind this shift.

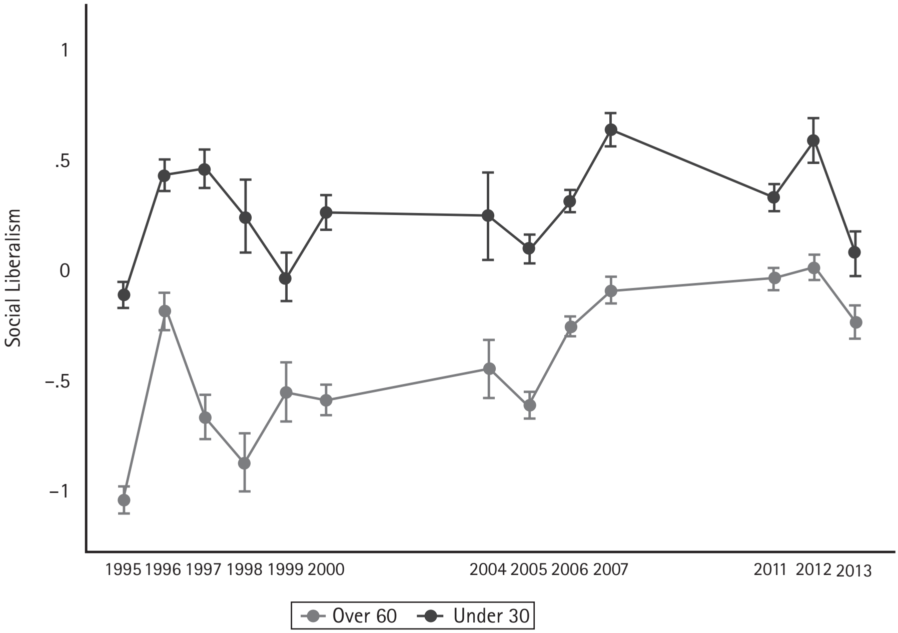

FIGURE 32.2 Social Liberalism by Age. World Values Survey and European Values Study Integrated Dataset (1981–2014)

Authors' own elaboration.

What implications does this have for political participation? Inglehart and Abramson (1994) noted that holding socially liberal or post-materialist views increases the chances of being politically active in conventional politics, as well as of approving of and engaging in unconventional political protests and social movements.

Figure 32.3 illustrates this by plotting the relative impact of social liberal values on political participation in Europe for three political generations: 1940–1950; 1960–1970; 1980–1990. The social liberalism indicator here includes progressive views on gender equality, immigration, and LGBT rights. A useful tool for assessing how changes in social liberalism affect engagement in these two types of participatory action is to look at the marginal effects of this value scale for the different generations we are interested in. Marginal effects show the change in the probability someone participated unconventionally or turned out to vote when the predictor, in this case social liberalism, increases by one unit.

The right-hand panel considers alternative participation, here intended as whether respondents took part in demonstrations, boycotted products, or signed a petition over the past year. The left-hand panel considers turnout, thus whether someone voted in the last national parliamentary election. Controlling for demographic characteristics including age, gender, educational level, and income, the figures tell us that socially liberal views have a positive effect on both alternative participation and turnout. Therefore, in both cases this value scale is associated with an increase in the likelihood that respondents participated unconventionally and turned out to vote.

However, the figure also shows that this effect is much larger for alternative participation than for turnout. For example, the marginal effect of social liberalism on alternative

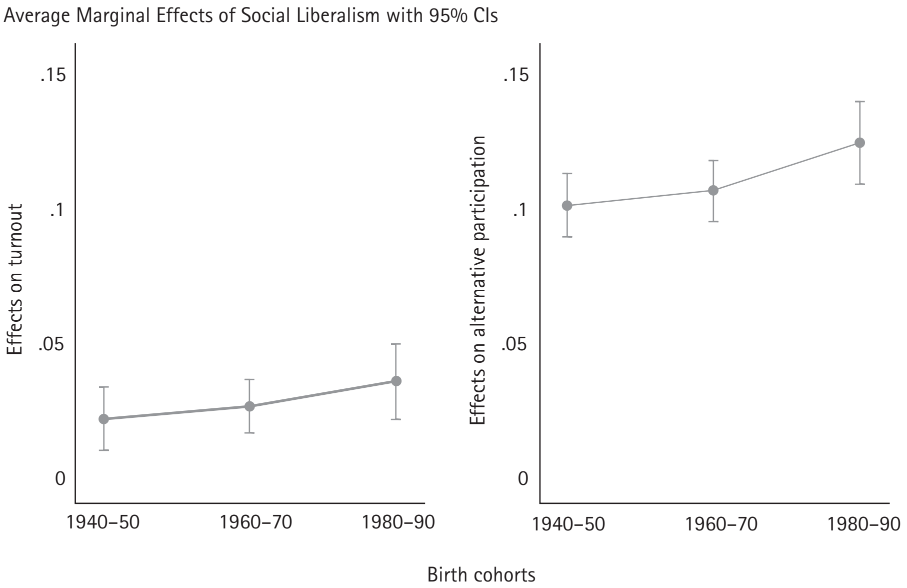

FIGURE 32.3 Marginal Effects of Social Liberalism on Participation. European Social Survey (ESS) Rounds 1-9

Authors' own elaboration.

participation for the 1960–1970 cohorts is around 0.10, which means that for each increase in scores on the social liberalism scale, the chances that respondents born in this cohort would engage in alternative participation increase by 10 percent. On the other hand, the effect for the same group on turnout is around 0.025, meaning that each increase in social liberalism raises their chances of turning out to vote only by 2.5 percent. Both figures also note how the effect of social liberalism has increased across cohorts, as in both instances it is the largest for the 1980–1990 generation.

These dynamics could have important implications for the future of political participation. If generational replacement is in fact the main driver behind changes in policy preferences, age differences will gradually disappear and parties will need to adapt their policy offerings accordingly (e.g., Flanagan and Lee 2003; Thau 2019). Moreover, participation in unconventional activities will be on the rise (e.g., Melo and Stockemer 2014; Milkman 2017).

How Easily Identifiable Are Age Effects?

The Problem of Measurement

The age-period-cohort (APC) framework treats political attitudes or behavior as a function of variables indexing each individual's age, year of observation ("period"), and year of birth ("cohort"). One fundamental problem with this approach is that the model in its general form is statistically underidentified: the age, period, and cohort variables are collinear.

In other words, it is impossible to empirically separate age effects from period and cohort effects (and vice versa) because the three are exact linear functions of each other (A = P-C) (Cutler and Bengtson 1974; De Graaf 1999; Glenn 2005).

As a result, distinct age, period, and cohort effects cannot be disentangled without additional, more or less arbitrary, assumptions. Some rely on theoretical assumptions (Riley 1973; Glenn 2005), others to try to model the different effects as precisely as possible. Yang and her colleagues (see e.g., Yang and Land, 2006), for example, introduced the method of hierarchical modeling to APC analysis. The main advantage of the approach is that it allows us to test whether contextual factors account for variance in cohorts or periods. The method has, however, also been criticized as it has strong data requirements (large sample sizes at both level-1 and level-2 are required) and assumptions that may not be sustainable in some applications or are difficult, if not impossible, to verify (see Bell and Jones 2018: 785 for an overview of the key papers and arguments that are part of the debate).

In this respect, some argue that attempting to devise increasingly complex and restricted statistical models is a flawed approach (e.g., Glenn 2005), and that simpler workarounds should be favored. For example, Franklin (2004) assesses the same hypotheses at different levels (individual, cohort, and aggregate) to tease out the different age effects and gauge the robustness of his findings. Others rely on side-information to provide the statistical restrictions necessary, such as Tilley and Evans (2014) who combine aging effects from panel data with generational and period effects from cross-sectional data, or Dinas and Stoker (2014) who extend APC analysis by including control groups to the cohorts examined so as to identify between-cohort differences.

Inferring from the large amount of empirical work on the topic, and as demonstrated in the previous section, it seems that age, period, and cohort/generation effects are often at work simultaneously. This empirical work confirms earlier scholarly observations. For example, Conover (1991: 130) argued that life-cycle and cohort effects are interwoven, as "people change in political orientations throughout their life, (but) generations respond differently to the same events." In his famous studies on value change, Inglehart (1971) also argues that later learning must overcome the inertia of pre-existing orientations. As Niemi and Sobieszek (1977: 228) pointed out in the 1970s: "Sorting out the relative impact of life cycle, generational, and period effects will no doubt prove to be extraordinarily complicated." To this day, disentangling these various effects remains one of the central challenges of socialization research.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF AGE AND GENERATIONAL RESEARCH

This chapter has addressed a number of key topics in relation to aging and political participation. The key challenge in teasing out the relationship between age and political participation is usually of an empirical nature. Previous studies have often had to rely on inappropriate data (e.g., cross-sectional data) or methods (e.g., macro correlations over time) to answer questions about attitudinal and behavioral dynamics. More recently, researchers have used multi-wave panel studies that follow the same individuals over time to study the stability or volatility of political preferences (see, e.g., Clarke and McCutcheon 2009; Prior 2010; Neundorf, Stegmueller, and Scotto 2011; Neundorf, Smets, and García-Albacete 2013; Tilley and Evans 2014). These studies provide convincing evidence that the impressionable years are indeed important for the development of political orientations, and that there is a great deal of stability in citizens' political identities and engagement in later life. The household panel studies on which most of these studies rely are, however, not designed by political scientists. This implies that variables of interest to political behavior scholars are in short supply.

New internet-based panel studies might provide an exciting new avenue for this type of research. For example, the Dutch Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences (LISS), based on a probability sample and started in 2007, includes a wide range of questions on political preferences and behavior. A similar online panel study, the German Internet Panel (GIP), which includes numerous political variables, was initiated in Germany in 2012. These studies have the potential to provide data to test remaining questions about the dynamics of political preferences.

As better data sources and better statistical methods become available, more fine-grained theoretical questions can be tackled. Recent research, for example, focuses on the interaction of different socializing agents (Neundorf, Niemi, and Smets 2016) and their relative importance (Miklikowska 2017), as well as on more complex household dynamics (Dahlgaard 2018). Other work seeks to understand whether socialization processes known to exist in Western democracies can be extended to new and emerging democracies (see e.g., Finkel 2002; Neundorf 2010; Bar-Tal et al. 2017). Potentially heterogeneous political socialization processes also have recently gained scholarly attention. As Ghitza and Gelman (2014) demonstrate, socialization patterns are different for people from different ethnic backgrounds.

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CHAPTER 33

GENDER AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

CAMILA PÁEZ-BERNAL AND MIKI CAUL KITTILSON

Gender structures connections between individuals and the political process in countries around the world. The lived experiences of women, in their full diversity, are rooted in women's historic exclusion from politics, discriminatory laws and policies, traditional gender roles, economic inequalities, and gender stereotypes. And, in a reinforcing process, the gendered nature of these connections to politics portends consequences for social and economic inequalities and policy outcomes. Gender differences in participation matter across local, national, and international political processes (Burns 2007; Paxton and Hughes 2007; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2012; Hinojosa and Kittilson 2020).

From a cross-national perspective, this chapter examines gender differences across a variety of modes of political participation. We begin by outlining previous studies on, and challenges in, explaining gender differences in participation. We offer some potential avenues for future research, some related to the most recent worldwide events that are shaping politics in the world like the #MeToo movement, which started in the United States, and the Purple and Green tides in Latin America.

Individual-level resources shape gender differences, and recent research has looked at how aggregate-level contextual influences work to encourage or discourage participation. Contextual influences such as electoral institutions and women's presence among elected officials and cabinet members have been highlighted in recent research, but the effects vary across types of political activities, regions, and time (Desposato and Norrander 2009; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2012; Liu and Banaszak 2017; Beauregard 2018).

We call for a consideration of a wider set of contextual factors to explain variation across place, time, and mode of participation. The contours of women's movements and women's organizations may be especially important for channeling women's participation into particular activities. Opportunities and incentives to participate in non-electoral participation are often shaped by grassroots movements at the local and regional level. And women's movements have transformed shared understandings of what is political, to include issues and activities long considered part of the private sphere (Safa 1990; Baldez 2003; Páez-Bernal 2016; Páez-Bernal 2021; De Lourdes 2019). As a consequence, consideration of women's movements may improve understanding of gender differences in participation.

We begin by presenting data from the 2017–2021 European World Values/World Value Survey to describe the broad contours of gender differences in non-electoral forms of participation. Then, we consider explanations for gender differences in participation derived from past research. We contend that examining only electoral forms of participation limits our understanding of how, when, and why men and women participate in the political process. Next, we consider grassroots and social movements as actors that empower and, simultaneously, limit women's political participation. Communitarian and private spaces are also grounds for political participation. Finally, we pose questions for future research.

The Puzzle of Gender Differences in Political Participation

A wealth of research on political participation has focused on gender differences in voter turnout at the national level. After women won the right to vote, in some countries women's voter turnout levels were lower than men's (Welch 1977; Baxter and Lansing 1983; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978). In recent decades, women's voter participation has equaled or exceeded men's in most democracies. For example, by the 1980s, across several European democracies, there were few gender differences in voter turnout (Christy 1987). Since then, voter turnout in national elections yields only minimal gender differences in many countries around the world (Pintor and Gratschew 2002; Norris 2002a; Burrell 2005; Carreras 2018; Rai 2017).

In contrast, for less widespread and more time-intensive forms of electoral participation, men often still report higher levels of activity. Across Europe, men are more likely to be members of political parties (Scarrow and Gezgor 2010). In the US at the end of the 1990s, Burns, Scholzman, and Verba (2001) found that women in the US were consistently less likely to make campaign contributions, join political organizations, and write letters to elected representatives. For many democracies, men are still significantly more likely than women to try to persuade others on how to vote, work on a campaign, contact a public official, join a political party, or attend a political meeting (Desposato and Norrander 2008; Coffe and Bolzendahl 2010; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2012; Espinal and Zhao 2015; Carreras 2018). Even when it comes to political discussion, men outpace women across 33 countries (Nir and McClurg 2015). And for 13 countries across Asia, there are no significant gender differences when it comes to voter participation, but men participate at higher rates in campaign activity (Liu 2020).

The repertoire of political participation has grown across democracies in recent decades. Many of these new activities, often referred to as protest or unconventional participation, focus less attention on elections or political parties, and instead are more issue-based. In this chapter, we will refer to this broad range of activities as "non-electoral" because many can no longer be considered unconventional or new. Some prominent examples of non-electoral participation include attending a demonstration, political consumerism, and signing petitions (Stolle and Micheletti 2005; Coffe and Bolzendahl 2010; Albarracin, Munier, and Bail 2017; Gundelach, and Kalte 2021). These forms of participation have become more popular in recent decades. Acik (2013) shows that for the 19 countries represented in the European Social Survey of 2002, signing petitions and buycotting are more frequent forms of participation than being part of a political party or donating money to them. For non-electoral forms of participation, resource- based inequalities among participants are found across 25 countries, drawing on the 2004 ISSP data (Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier 2010).

Prior research demonstrates that women and men differ in their levels of participation across an array of non-electoral activities. Importantly, gender gaps appear to widen around the level of intensity in the activity. Comparing seven European countries, Grasso and Giugni (2019) find that gender differences in protest activity are statistically significant for the intensity, but not frequency. Since the 1990s in India, Rai (2017) documents women's increasing participation in co-operatives, women's collectives, grassroots organizations, and trade unions. Across 18 industrialized democracies, women are more likely to sign a petition or raise money for a social or political group, but less likely to join a demonstration (Coffe and Bolzendahl 2010). Across Asia, men are more active in collective participation and protest (Liu 2020). According to Espinal and Zhao (2015), in 18 Latin-American countries, men tend to participate more than women in political organizations' meetings, work for a party or a candidate in campaigns, attend protests and demonstrations, community, economic, sport, and recreational associations. Yet women are more prone to assist religious and parent–teacher associations (Espinal and Zhao 2015). And across 25 countries in the 2004 ISSP Survey, women are more likely to sign a petition, donate money, or boycott products, but less likely to join a demonstration, join a political party, participate on the internet or contact a politician (Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier 2010).

Some forms of non-electoral participation push the boundaries of what was traditionally considered political. These activities may be more closely aligned with everyday life (Stolle and Hooghe 2005). Political consumerism, a set of political activities including buying or boycotting products or services for political or ethical reasons, is on the rise across most democracies. Under traditional gender roles, women take up the majority of family care activities, including shopping. Purchasing or boycotting a particular product for ethical reasons is a natural extension of careful consumer activity. Findings from Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti (2005), Acik (2013), and Gundelach and Kalte (2021) reveal that women are more likely to engage in political consumer activities than men in Europe.

Do gender differences in political participation persist? Vexing and persistent gender differences lead us to be especially interested in the forms of participation that are less tied to "civic duty," and more time intensive and policy focused than casting a ballot. We examine global levels of participation in political parties, demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts with the European Values Survey/World Values Survey, 2017–2021. Table 33.1 reports the percentage of respondents reporting that they "have done" a given activity. Joining a political party is one activity that connects citizens to the electoral process in a structured way. Across all of the countries in the joint EVS/WVS study, among men, the percentage of respondents reporting they belong to a political party is 11.9 percent, and among women 8.3 percent report the same, and this difference is statistically significant.

The global data also reveal that gender differences in non-electoral participation obstinately endure: men are more likely to participate in lawful/peaceful demonstrations, boycotts, and strikes, and the gender differences are statistically significant in each case. For lawful/peaceful demonstrations, 17.2 percent of men report participating, while only 13.2 percent of women report the same. And the percentage point gap is 2.1 for boycotting, and 2.5 for strikes. While these differences are not overwhelming, they nonetheless represent a significant gap in the voices contributing to these events, potentially shaping the discourse, framing, and lived experiences that comprise participants. See Figure 33.1.

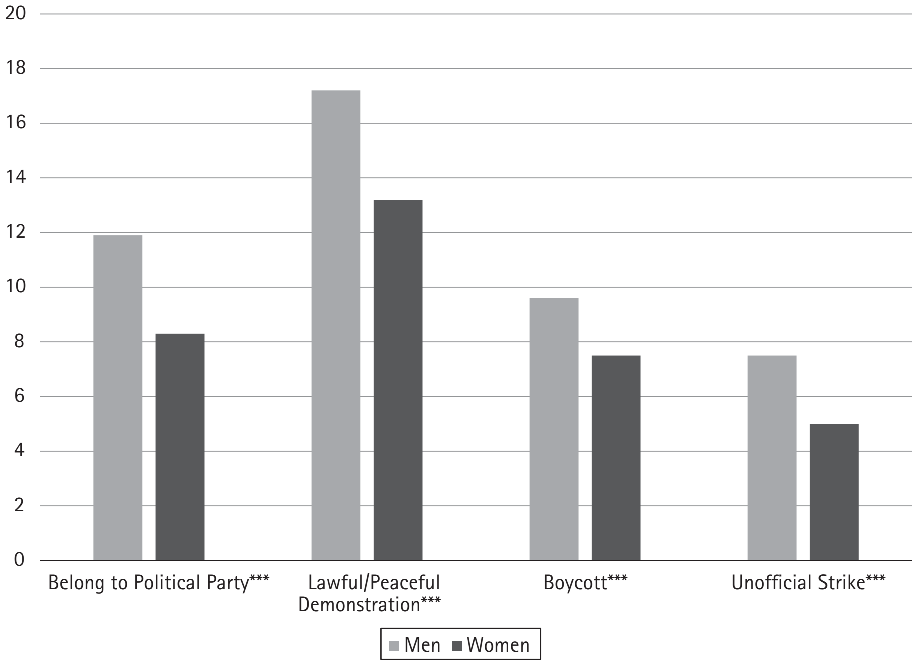

FIGURE 33.1 Gender Differences in Non-Electoral and Electoral Forms of Participation

Source: European Values/World Values Survey, Wave 7, 2017-21.

These differences represent global patterns in gender differences across modes of participation. Below the surface at the country level, there is a great deal of variation. Gender gaps in connecting to party and electoral politics are more minimal. Specifically, at the country level, most countries register non-statistically significant relationships between gender and belonging to a political party. In several countries, women report higher rates of belonging to party organizations. For example, in Japan, among men 3.8 percent report belonging to a political party, and among women 4.9 percent. Similarly, in New Zealand, it is 12.5 percent of men and 14.2 percent of women. In contrast, of the 67 countries in the World Values Survey, 48 countries register statistically significant differences between men and women who reported having participated in a lawful/peaceful demonstration. For example, gender gaps favoring men register 11.4 percentage points in Italy and 10.6 percentage points in Colombia. Yet in some cases, such as New Zealand and Norway, women report engaging in a lawful demonstration more frequently than men.

Explanations for Gender Differences in Participation

Taken together, a vast body of past research offers sets of explanation at the individual and contextual levels, and most of these are applied to electoral forms of participation. Further, contextual influences have emphasized national-level electoral institutions and women's descriptive representation in government.

Individual-Level Explanations

Individual-level explanations for gender differences in participation are often rooted in access to resources. Several studies have argued that, even in wealthy democracies, women's average lower levels of education, income, and occupational prestige have an impact in electoral and non-electoral political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Norris 2002b; Fraile and Gomez 2017; Albarracin, Munier, and Bail 2017). Given the finding that young women in the US report equal aspirational rates of participation to young men, the fact that as adults women's actual rates of activity fall below men's, cause Hooghe and Stolle (2004) to argue for the role of resources in diminishing women's participation.

Among resource explanations, the importance of education for reducing gender gaps has been established in comparative research (Norris 2002b). Importantly, education exerts differential impact for different groups of women in the US, and importantly for women of color (Brown 2014). Indeed, in the US, the resource model better explains White women's political participation levels than that of Black or Hispanic women (Holman 2020).

Other characteristics such as age and employment status contribute to electoral and non-electoral participation levels (Desposato and Norrander 2009), which are theorized to affect access to information, resources, and social networks that stimulate involvement. Prior research in the US found women's workforce participation to be integral to predicting voter participation and more time intensive forms of participation in elections (Andersen 1975; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001). For instance, economic networks increase women's political participation in India by augmenting collective action, access to information, confidence, and civic skills (Artiz 2021) Other forms of economic resources such as women's land ownership can empower women's political participation in Tanzania (Grabe 2015).

Importantly, gender intersects in impactful ways with multiple and overlapping processes of marginalization (Crenshaw 1989; Hancock 2016). And these intersections of power have often been overlooked in studies of political behavior (Simien 2007). In recent years, several studies have begun to examine the nexus of race, ethnicity, gender, and other forms of privilege and disadvantage on participation (Reingold, Hayne, and Widner 2021).

Attitudes and orientations such as political interest, efficacy, and knowledge, can also pull citizens into the democratic process (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Political interest and efficacy may drive citizens to acquire political information, and to engage in political discussions and activities. Across 31 democracies, Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer (2012) find men are more politically interested and knowledgeable than women, more likely to discuss politics, and more likely to attempt to politically persuade others. And these gender gaps persist cross-nationally for political knowledge as well: in recent years men have registered higher levels of political knowledge. (Dassonneville and McAllister 2018).

Both social networks and a shared sense of group consciousness can draw women into political activity through their socializing and mobilizing effects. The social networks that individuals are in differentially influence women's and men's political participation. Based on evidence of German youth engagement in 2015, young women often receive less encouragement to engage in politics from their networks of family and friends, and this lack of support is accompanied by young women reporting lower levels of internal political efficacy (Pfanzelt and Spies 2019). Djupe, McClurg, and Sokhey (2010) find that when women are exposed to political disagreement, their participation is depressed.

Social and communitarian networks may bolster women's participation. Group consciousness can also boost political activity through its mobilizing effects. The Civil Rights Movement, as a transformational force in US history, strengthened collective consciousness among Black women. Brown's (2014) research shows linked fate exerted its most powerful influence among Black women, relative to other groups of women.

Contextual Influences

The vast variation across countries in the size of their gender gaps in participation has sparked interest in understanding how aggregate-level context either filters women out of the political process or promotes participation. The ways that individual-level influences interact with macro-level factors have been considered for electoral forms of participation, and for protest participation (Grasso and Giugni 2016).

In addition to the individual level, socioeconomic explanations are cited at the country level. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris (2003) argue that shared values and perceptions of women's roles in the political arena flow from economic development and religious traditions. The wealthier and more secular the country, Inglehart and Norris argue, the more egalitarian the gender attitudes. In this way, socioeconomic change fosters changes in socialization. Traditional attitudes towards gender roles limit women's access to the public sphere, while more egalitarian views of gender expand women's access to the public sphere, and often even erode the artificial barriers between public and private spheres.

Supplementary structural factors that can influence gender differences in participation include political regime and state religion. Focusing on Muslim-majority countries, Coffé and Dille (2015) find that the effect of state Islamization on political participation is statistically significant and negative when the level of democracy is not controlled for. This significance disappears once level of democracy is controlled for. That is, the effect of the level of democracy takes primacy over the effect of state Islamization on overall levels of political participation. Further, regional effects are apparent. Examining generational differences in the gender gap in participation, Coffé (2013) finds there are more generational differences in Western compared with Eastern Europe for non-electoral activities, but not for electoral participation.

Beyond socioeconomic structures and shared attitudes, a promising line of research connects public policy outcomes to participation. Burns (2007) contends that the salience of particular policies may mobilize women, accounting for variability in gender gaps across elections. Fraile and Gomez (2017) demonstrated that in Europe the implementation of gender-friendly policies decreases the political engagement gap in adulthood. Shorrocks and Grasso (2020) compare gender differences in support for social spending in the United States and Britain across generations. In the context of lower welfare state provision in the US, gender gaps widen for younger generations. Conversely, in Britain's relatively higher context of welfare, gender gaps narrow across generations.

Electoral institutions matter as well. In relation to electoral participation, Cordova and Rangel (2017) argued that compulsory voting laws reduce gender gap in electoral actions; countries that enforced mandatory voting have smaller gender gaps in voting, access to political party information, party attachment, and campaign participation. In this sense, compulsory voting is related to more access to information of the electoral process. And Beauregard's (2017) comparative analysis of wealthy democracies reveals plurality electoral rules is related to smaller gender differences in persuading others on how to vote and supporting a party or candidate. A different relationship is uncovered by Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer (2012), who find that across a broader set of countries, proportional electoral results ameliorate gender differences in political engagement. They theorize that proportionality in the votes to seats translation signals a political environment that is open to power-sharing, inclusion, and the representation of multiple interests.

Another electoral institution potentially conditioning men and women's participation is gender quotas. Theoretically, gender quotas for elected office can reshape ideas about the appropriateness of women in politics, and acknowledge their underrepresentation, potentially mobilizing them at the mass level (Kittilson 2005). However, few empirical comparative studies find significant impacts from gender quotas (Morgan and Buice 2013; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2012; Zetterberg 2009). Some studies question the long-term influence of quotas in women's political participation, suggesting that more fundamental changes are necessary to diminish gender inequality in political participation (Ara and Northcote 2020).

Importantly, women's presence in government exerts influence over gender gaps in mass-level political participation. Broadly, descriptive representation can mobilize political engagement among the represented group (Dovi 2002: 730, fn. 6). Women's presence in elected office may function as a symbol of women's inclusion in the political process. Several studies examine the role of women in elected office. Where there are more women in the national legislature, women's participation tends to be higher across an array of activities (High-Pippert and Comer 1998; Alexander 2012; Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007; Paxton and Hughes 2007; Desposato and Norrander 2009; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001). For 20 countries across the continent of Africa, Barnes and Burchard (2013) find that more women in the legislature is associated with more narrow gender gaps in political discussion, and in contacting members of parliament and party officials.

Yet other studies offer contradictory results, with women's percentages in elected office having few effects on participation (Lawless 2004; Dolan 2006; Karp and Banducci 2008). In fact, Liu's (2018) comparative study of Asian countries reveals that women in the legislature can actually dampen women's participation at the mass level.

Hinojosa and Kittilson (2020) argue that it is visible jumps in women's numbers in elected office that trigger the attitudinal changes that boost participation. Drawing on pre- and post-election surveys from Uruguay, they find that after women's presence in the national legislature doubled, women's engagement in the political process increased. Recent research also suggests that rather than a snapshot of women's representation, to signal women's inclusion in the political arena requires longer-term commitment. In a study of 20 wealthy democracies, Beauregard (2018) finds that the longer it has been since women achieved suffrage, the smaller the gender differences in voting, contacting politicians, and working with others.

Women's presence in other areas of government appears to matter as well. Reyes-Housholder and Schwindt-Bayer (2016) link women as presidents to women's higher levels of participation. Liu and Banaszak (2017) find a similar relationship for women cabinet members. Women are more likely to vote, join parties, sign petitions, and peacefully demonstrate (but not engage in strikes or boycotts) in countries with more women in the cabinet.

New Directions: The Role of Grassroots Participation and Social Movements

Gender gaps in political participation vary across modes of participation, and so too do the explanations for these gaps vary by mode. Much previous work centers on explaining electoral forms of participation, but expanding scholarly attention to non-electoral forms of participation may offer insights into the ways women's relatively recent inclusion in the political sphere is transforming the fundamental nature of what constitutes political activity. Indeed, participation in forms of grassroots and movement politics is shaped by a complex set of factors. In turn, movements construct context, and may powerfully shape how and when men and women alike participate in the political arena.

Contextual influences are often considered in isolation from one another, rather than as a constellation of factors that can impact participation in conditional ways. Further, cross-level links between the international, national, and local can help theorize how context creates opportunities and incentives for particular forms of participation. As Grasso and Giugni (2016) note, "[P]rotest mobilization is borne out of the complex interaction of factors at different levels, in turn impacting on each other" (677).

Because studies of individual-level participation are often based on survey data, they are often not considered in relation to the broader framework of movement politics. And survey questions can overlook women's participation in informal associations and new forms of participation. Political participation has been transformed by social movements. Social movements make it possible for civic society to express their demands through alternative and creative channels (Chun, Lipsitz, and Shin 2013). The nature of social movements may structure gender differences in political participation. In a study of 19 European countries, Acik (2013) demonstrates that consumer participation is closely related to new social movement organizations. This suggests research should examine the connections between movements and different types of political participation.

International women's movements empowered multiple advances for women's political participation. The UN Decade for Women and the concomitant world conferences created parallel forums for NGOs from all over the world. These women's organizations formed alliances, shared strategies, expanded the set of focal issues, and diversified women's experiences (Chen 1995). They promoted dialogue amongst women from all over the world and made available resources and information for women in different countries (Hughes, Paxton, Quinsaat, and Reith 2018). Baldez (2003) points out that international women's movements allow organizational networks, and contact with international feminists could help women in autocratic countries organize and structure their demands towards democratization.

The presence of international women's organizations can make it possible to put gender and women's issues in local agendas and impact the emergence and work of grassroots movements (Feree and Tripp 2006). On the other hand, international movements sometimes assume that the needs of all women are the same, and can make invisible particular women's political experiences, behaviors, and actions at the local and individual level. So, global influences can impact the state and the social movements and also motivate possible changes that transform the scenario for local movements (Suh 2011).

Ties between women's movements and women's individual levels of participation may be forged through the resources that women use to become politically engaged, and through the multiple connections created between traditionally separate private and public spheres. Women's movements also heighten gender consciousness, raising expectations of gender equality, and at the same time they can be spaces of reproduction of gendered mechanisms. Further, women's movements have dismantled traditional barriers between the public and private spheres (Safa 1990). By carving out spaces for participation, movements claim the right for women to be in public spaces.

Some recent studies explore the impact of grassroots movements on the individual political participation of women in public and private scenarios, demonstrating that women's political participation enabled by social movements and communitarian organizations, and, simultaneously, established gendered roles limited women's actions and reproduced inequalities (Duárez-Mendoza, Rodríguez, Perez, and Segura 2019; De Lourdes 2019; Páez-Bernal 2016). Páez-Bernal (2016, 2021) describes how the historical context and emergence of some social movements in Montes de María (Colombia) allowed peasant women to be involved in local political scenarios and, simultaneously, to question the gender roles imposed on them as the multiple forms of violence they had experienced. Also, the participation of these women has been limited by patriarchal hierarchies and structures that persist in the community and the movements.

Often political roles and actions that women are developing at the local and communitarian level are related to traditional caregiving roles and subscribed to private spheres. In many cases, even if the gender gap in electoral participation has decreased, and reversed in some cases, other political activities and behaviors are still shaped by gendered structures and behaviors that evidence women's political participation limitations: their restriction to the private spheres can channel women's efforts into political consumerism, caregiving, and activities related to religion, and education (Espinal and Zhao 2015) instead of political confrontations, protests, and other types of direct political action.

Studies of participation in Latin America exemplify changes in local forms of participation. These dynamics are especially evident in poor women's movements in Latin America where new, collective forms of participation such as comedores populares (communal kitchens) and other neighborhood activities have bolstered women's participation in a new form of doing politics (Safa 1990). Often local, collective efforts center on the provision of public services such as health care, running water, transportation, or childcare. In this way, traditionally private concerns become public sites of political contestation. Duárez-Mendoza, Rodríguez, Perez, and Segura (2019) affirm that women's participation in rondas campesinas (peasant patrols) in Peru gives women political spaces but that they also are limited to gendered roles. De Lourdes (2019) shows how women develop political participation linked to territory struggles as a result of their participation in a peasant movement, but also how their political participation in the community makes them question their private context where they face violence and limitations due to their gender. Páez-Bernal (2016, 2021) affirms that grassroots movements could be communitarian spaces that stimulate women's political participation and knowledge but they also could be based on patriarchal and gendered dynamics that limit women's participation to specific tasks and activities.

The presence of local institutions and grassroots movements are fundamental to understand how women participate, and why. In this sense, local movements give women resources to be more involved in local and regional politics, and tools to question the gendered roles that situate them in the domestic sphere. In spaces of local participation women can create networks that make them aware of how their gendered roles are linked to structural inequalities (Páez-Bernal 2016; Páez-Bernal 2021). At the same time, these movements have socialization mechanisms that produce gender inequalities amongst the movements and social retaliation to the women for questioning these roles. It is not a unified, unidirectional, and non-contradictory phenomenon.

Local political movements are connected with international movements, and the flow of issues does not only run from the international to the local, but also in reverse. Local movements raise new topics into the debate because they are constantly changing according to the necessities of the communities and their contexts. There are a broad range of local movements that are structured around the fights of international women's movements and, at the same time, are diverse. Suh (2011) studying the Korean Women's movement explains how local or grassroots movements can become institutionalized as a result of strategic choices shaped by the international context and organizations, the national political regime, and by considering the state as a partner and not as a target. In this sense, social movements can change and transform. And so too can their forms of participation.

Also, movements like MeToo in the United States and Ni Una Mas and Paridad Ya in Latin America are shaping women's political participation. In addition, women's mobilization in Latin American fighting for sexual and reproductive rights and political inclusion have increased women's levels of protesting and other non-electoral political actions (Landa 2016; García-Del Moral 2016; Blofield and Ewig 2017; Blofield, Ewig, and Piscopo 2017; Fernandez Anderson 2017; Davi and Moseley 2021). Consequently, social movements can be a channel for women to become politically active—across a range of electoral and non-electoral activities—to challenge the established order and question the institutions (Alterman 1985; Merry, Levitt, Șerban, and Yoon 2010; Suh 2011).

Conclusion

Women's political participation has increased for some modes of participation, thus reducing gender gaps. Yet gender differences endure, even for non-electoral participation actions. Substantial differences across countries have prompted research over the past two decades to consider both individual-level and contextual explanations.

Taken together, past studies offer mixed findings for the role of electoral institutions, gender quotas, and women's presence in government for shaping political activity and engagement among men and women at the mass level. These disparate findings vary considerably across the type of participation, the scope of countries included in the study, and the time frame. Consequently, future research should carefully consider the nested context within which these factors operate. The institutionalization of party systems, structures of representation, and social movement dynamics can channel participatory efforts into particular activities, some electoral and others outside of party and electoral politics.

An important, but often overlooked, contextual force shaping individual participation is broader social movements that can shape individual-level activity. The international women's movement has transformed the conception of politics itself to include issues and activities long considered private.

Future research should address several questions regarding the complexity of women's political participation. Although past research often portrays women's political experience as monolithic, increasingly, recent research on gender and political participation seeks to address the complexity and diversity of women's political experiences. It is vital to consider the multiple and overlapping forms of marginalization that can shape women's connections to the political process. Factors such as socioeconomic status, education, race and ethnicity, household, age, motherhood, and rural/urban differences may interact with gender in complex ways. Further, gender identity is a dimension that may impact political participation. In this case, gender is a more complex dimension that cannot be reduced to a binary variable.

The study of women, gender, and political participation must look toward developing questions, theories, and methodologies able to comprehend the diverse experiences of women. In particular, new forms of political participation, like consumerism, may open new possibilities to groups that have been historically excluded from traditional forms of participation, such as racial or ethnic minorities or young women.

Addressing these complexities requires a more frequent and open the dialogue across disciplinary boundaries to comprehend women's multiple political experiences, and to understand better the different modes of participation. The nexus of aggregate social movements and individual-level participation affects men's and women's political participation in private and public spheres. For instance, there are lessons for participation research from studies rooted in sociology, some of them from an intersectional and critical approach (Chun, Lipsitz, and Shin 2013; Alfama 2009; Laperrière and Lèpinard 2016). And studying local-level participation requires building on survey data to employ mixed methodologies.

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CHAPTER 34

CLASS AND EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY IN ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

GEOFFREY EVANS AND MATTHEW HEPPLEWHITE

Class and education have long been held to be crucial determinants of political participation (see, for example, Milbrath 1965; Verba and Nie 1972; Barnes and Kaase 1979; Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980; Conway 1985; Nagel 1987; Kriesi 1989; Teixeira 1992; Eder 1993; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Nie, Junn, and Stehlik-Barry 1996; Van Aelst and Walgrave 2001; Dalton 2002; Hylmö and Wennerhag 2015). Put simply, people of higher socioeconomic status and people with higher levels of education (often the same people) participate more in politics. "Participation" encompasses a wide variety of activities, including voting, contacting public officials, signing a petition, working on political campaigns, contributing financially to a political party or candidate, attending a protest, and so on.

Moreover, class-based and education-based differences in one undoubtedly important aspect of political participation—voting—have increased in recent decades in the West.[1] Electoral turnout in these countries has fallen, from an average of 83 percent in the 1970s to just 71 percent in the 2000s (Siaroff 2009: 43), and the decline has been most pronounced among the working class and the least educated.

In Britain, for example, the difference in reported turnout between the working and middle classes was less than 5 percent in 1964; by 2010 it had risen to 19 percent (Heath 2018: 1053). Confirmatory findings come from Goldberg (2020: 80–81), who describes how "After a rather equal participation until 2001, a large gap emerged resulting in a turnout for the higher classes (professionals) around twice as high as for the lower classes (unskilled) in 2015." In Finland, meanwhile, working-class turnout fell by 10 percent between 1987 and 2015, compared to just 2 percent among the upper non-manual group (Lahtinen 2019: 41). Rennwald has demonstrated that increasing class differentials in turnout are a (Western) Europe-wide phenomenon, with the ratio of worker electoral participation to overall electoral participation falling from 1 to 0.88 in France, from 0.96 to 0.91 in Germany, from 0.99 to 0.92 in Austria, and from 0.89 to 0.82 in Switzerland (Rennwald 2020: 53), while Hout, Brooks, and Manza (1995) show that America too has experienced a growing class-based gap in turnout.

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[1] For reasons of space, we focus primarily on conventional forms of political participation in this chapter. We reference various studies on unconventional forms of political participation.

With regard to education, there has been a fall in turnout among the least educated in America from two-thirds to under half between 1960 and 2004, whilst turnout among the best-educated has remained stable at between 87 and 93 percent throughout the period 1952 to 2012 (Dalton 2017: 173). Dassonneville and Hooghe (2017) similarly found in their study of Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the US that the impact of educational attainment on turnout had increased in all six countries in recent decades. Confirmatory findings for a growing education-based gap in turnout are also found in the work of Lyons and Alexander (2000), Blais, Gidengil, and Nevitte (2004), Armingeon and Schädel (2015), and Finseraas and Hesstvedt (2020).

These trends, derived as most are from survey estimates, are moreover likely to be very much a lower-bound estimate of inequalities in electoral participation. Levels of survey non-response are typically higher amongst the working class and less highly educated. People who do not respond to surveys are also less likely to vote. As a consequence, survey-based estimates of non-voting amongst the working class and less highly educated are likely to be biased downwards compared with those for the middle class and highly educated. As a result, in countries where official administrative records of turnout are kept, we find evidence of far larger differences in turnout by class and education than can usually be detected using even high-quality sample surveys. For example, in their comparison of Finnish official register data with survey estimates by class, education, and income groups, Lahtinen et al (2019: 364) find that "socioeconomic differences in the probability of voting in register-based data were at least two-thirds larger than differences obtained when using standard survey techniques." Dahlgaard et al's (2019) comparison of Danish register data with survey estimates indicates a similarly dramatic masking effect for differences in education.

We are thus confronted with two questions:

- Why do class and education matter for political participation?
- Why do they appear to matter more in more recent years?

The Role of Class and Education in Political Participation

Class and education have long been known to correlate with political participation. Thus, Milbrath (1965: 116) noted in the 1960s how "studies consistently show that higher class persons are more likely to participate in politics than lower class persons … This proposition has been confirmed in numerous countries" and Converse (1972: 324) in the early 1970s how "education is everywhere the universal solvent, and the relationship is always in the same direction. The higher the education, the greater the 'good' values of the variable. The educated citizen is attentive, knowledgeable and participatory, and the uneducated citizen is not."

The formerly dominant explanation as to why being higher/middle class and having higher levels of education appear to facilitate participation is that they confer resources (see, for example, Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012; Schlozman, Brady, and Verba 2018). Proponents of the resource model argue that time, money, and civic skills (i.e., "communications and organizational capacities") are particularly important resources in this regard (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995: 273). They posit that those with higher socioeconomic status have more money and greater civic skills than those on the lower socioeconomic rungs, though they find that the amount of free time available to people is related to their life circumstances—for example, whether or not they have children—rather than their socioeconomic status (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995: 274–276).

However, focusing solely on resources cannot fully explain political participation. It cannot, for example, account for falling levels of turnout in the West in recent decades at a time of rising levels of income and education. Nor can it explain why countries with broadly similar levels of income and education have experienced radically different falls in turnout over the period in question; a fall, for example, of just 2 percent in Denmark between the 1970s and 2000s compared to a fall of 15 percent in the UK (Siaroff 2009: 43). Nor can it explain the sudden changes in levels of participation. The fall in turnout in the UK (both in general and among the working class in particular) occurred during the late 1990s and early 2000s—the time, money, and civic skills of the British population as a whole and the British working class specifically did not alter in a noticeable way during this period.

Resource model scholars accept that resources alone cannot fully explain political participation. Thus, they do not ignore the role played by psychological factors (for example, a person's level of interest in politics and their feelings of efficacy) and networks of recruitment in political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995: 16). Nor should they. Innumerable studies show that those who are interested in politics and those who believe that their participation will make a difference are more likely to participate (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Campbell, Gurin, and Miller 1954; Benney, Gray, and Pear 1956; Bennett 1986; Parry, Moyser, and Day 1992). Similarly, work by Huckfeldt (1979) and Knoke (1990) highlights the importance of recruitment networks in facilitating political participation.

Moreover, they accept that their bottom-up/demand-side explanation of political participation is only half the story. Brady, Verba, and Schlozman (1995: 290), for example, write of "the importance of mobilization by political leaders, mobilization around issues, and mobilization by political opportunities ... A complete theory of political participation must synthesize both perspectives."

This other perspective, which emphasizes the role of top-down/supply-side factors in political participation, has been called "mobilization theory" and its underlying premise is that "[p]eople participate in electoral politics because someone encourages or inspires them to take part" (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993: 161). The significance of encouragement and inspiration has been demonstrated countless times: Gosnell (1927), for example, found that citizens who received a mailed reminder to vote in the 1925 Chicago municipal election were 9 percent more likely to do so than those who did not, Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee (1954) that being contacted by a party activist increased turnout in the 1948 presidential election by 8 percent, and Gerber and Green (2000: 658) that contact with a canvasser raised turnout in Connecticut by 9 percent in the 1998 US mid-term elections.

INEQUALITY AND TURNOUT

Some promising analyses argue that rather than focusing on resources per se as predictors of participation, we should look at variations in their distribution. Schäfer and Schwander (2019), for example, contend that increasing income inequality in the West (see Alderson and Nielson 2002; Piketty 2014; Alvaredo et al. 2017) is the cause of increasing inequality in participation. Using data from twenty-one OECD countries for the period 1980–2014, they find that voter turnout is lower in more unequal societies, to the tune of 7 to 15 percent (depending on the model used) and that the decline in turnout is most pronounced among low-income groups. This relationship between economic inequality and political inequality was also found by Goodin and Dryzek (1980), Mahler (2002), Lister (2007), Solt (2008), Anderson and Beramendi (2012), Lancee and Van de Werfhorst (2012), and Jensen and Jespersen (2017). It has been suggested that increases in non-turnout among the less well-off in the face of increasing income inequality is a rational response to a political system seemingly biased in favor of the rich (Pateman 1971; Goodin and Dryzek 1980).

Stockemer and Scruggs (2012), in contrast, had argued that the level of income inequality in Western democracies has no clear effect on turnout, but, as Schäfer and Schwander (2019: 397) point out, "Stockemer and Scruggs include a time variable in their models that shows a significant negative effect on turnout. If inequality rises over time and actually leads to a turnout decline, including a time trend may capture a good deal of what is actually an effect of inequality."

However, inequality is not a sufficient explanation. There are, for instance, substantial differences in participation among classes in even the most equal societies, for example Finland (Lahtinen 2019). Further, although class-based differences in political participation have accelerated in Britain in recent years, inequality has remained relatively stable since the 1990s (Cribb et al. 2013: 38). Thus, growing inequality alone cannot explain the plummeting participation of the British working class in the twenty-first century. Moreover, none of the studies cited control for what parties offer, and it is to the top-down/supply-side activities of political parties that we now turn.

REPRESENTATION

Could representation (or lack thereof) be the missing piece of the puzzle? If political parties are not providing the policies—or politicians—that working-class people want, then it is entirely rational for them to no longer incur the costs of voting and instead abstain (Downs 1957). This perspective, based upon the insights of mobilization theory, contends, as Przeworski (1985: 100) puts it, that "individual voting behavior is an effect of the activities of political parties."

Recent work has emphasized the role of parties' policy platforms in encouraging—and discouraging—turnout. Utilizing data from 28 democracies, Brockington (2009) has demonstrated that the greater the perceived distance in policy between citizen and closest party, the less likely it is that the citizen will vote. Schäfer and Debus (2018) have confirmed this national-level finding at the supranational level of European elections.

It has been shown that one group of citizens have been particularly poorly represented in the West in recent decades: left-authoritarians, that is to say, people who hold left-wing positions on economic policy and authoritarian, conservative, and nationalist positions on cultural policy issues (Van Der Brug and Van Spanje 2009; Lefkofridi, Wagner, and Willmann 2014). As with other citizens, when the demand for these policies is not met with supply, left-authoritarians stop voting. In their cross-sectional study of 14 Western European countries, Hillen and Steiner (2020) show that when left-authoritarian voters are faced with a "supply gap" in the form of few, if any, left-authoritarian parties, these voters withdraw from politics. Their findings are confirmed by Evans and Hall's (2019) analysis of eight Western democracies between 1990 and 2010. Further underscoring the importance of the supply–demand link for political participation, Hillen and Steiner (2020: 332) note that their finding of a fall in turnout among left-authoritarians does "*not* extend to Eastern Europe, where parties with left-authoritarian positions are widespread" [emphasis in original]. These general findings are replicated in country-specific case studies. Hillen and Steiner (2020), for example, show how the emergence of a viable left-authoritarian party in Finland (the Finns Party, originally known as the True Finns), led to increased voting among those holding left-authoritarian views.

That citizens with these views are underrepresented and thus less likely to vote is extremely pertinent to our discussion, as these views are predominantly held by the working class and the least educated, i.e., those who have disproportionately withdrawn from the political arena. We illustrate this with an examination of the society where the impact of decisions by parties on patterns of class voting has been most extensively studied: Britain. Moreover, our case study country has long been viewed as an, arguably the, archetype of a class-based political system; as Pulzer (1967: 98) memorably put it: "Class is the basis of British party politics; all else is embellishment and detail." Indeed, in the post-war era both the Labour *and* Conservative parties were deeply concerned with appealing to working-class interests, as the "forward march of labour" was consolidated (Williams 1961; Westergaard 1995). It was even argued that the middle class were "the class without a party" (Bonham 1954: 30). It therefore provides a particularly useful test case of how the electoral marginalization of working-class voters can occur from a position of relative strength.

The British Case

In the United Kingdom turnout plummeted from 77.7 percent in 1992 to 71.4 percent in 1997 to just 59.4 percent in 2001, before "recovering" in 2005 to 61.4 percent. For comparison, turnout at the 1950 and 1951 general elections was 83.9 and 82.6 percent, respectively (Audickas and Cracknell 2018: 25).[2] This fall has been especially pronounced amongst the working class. From 1987 onwards, the British Election Study ("BES") has validated reported turnout of respondents against the official electoral record. Figure 34.1 (from Evans and Tilley 2017) shows the validated turnout figures for different classes and different levels of

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[2] Moreover, Grasso et al (2019) find that this fall in conventional forms of political activity has not been compensated for by a rise in unconventional forms of political activity such as attendance at protests.

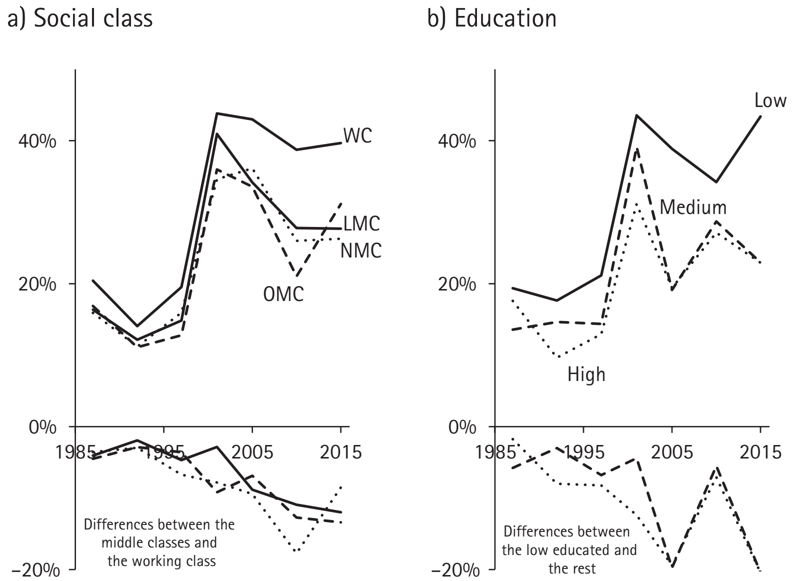

FIGURE 34.1 Non-Voting Rates by Occupational Class and Education

Note: The four occupational classes displayed are the old middle class (OMC), new middle class (NMC), lower middle class (LMC), and working class (WC). Three educational groups are displayed: people with degree-level education (high), people with A-Level equivalent education (medium), and people who left school at the minimum leaving age (low).

The figure shows predicted probabilities of non-voting from logit regression models for each year separately. Controls for trade union membership, gender, age, region, religion, and race are included. These predicted probabilities are for a White man with no religion, in his forties, with middling educational attainment, a junior middle-class job, not a trade union member, living in the southeast of England.

Source: British Election Studies 1987–2015; Evans and Tilley 2017: 173.

educational attainment. High numbers indicate that people are less likely to vote. The lines below the x-axes are the differences between the three middle-class groups and the working class and the differences between those with a high or medium education and those with a low level of education. We can see how non-turnout among the working class and the least educated has outstripped that of the middle class and more educated, resulting in a participation gap which did not exist in the 1980s. Crewe, Fox, and Alt (1977) show that the four elections between 1966 and October 1974 likewise saw little (and certainly not statistically significant) difference in participation rates between the classes.

These patterns are even more evident when class position and educational level are combined, as shown in Figure 34.2. It can be seen that being working class and having a lower level of education combine to accentuate the turnout gap, which reached 30 percent by 2015.

How can this development be understood? The answer has emerged from the long-running debate over the extent of class voting in Britain. In the early days of the BES, class was the primary explanatory factor used to explain how people voted: the working class voted for Labour; the middle class for the Conservatives. Butler and Stokes's *Political Change in Britain* (1969: 4) for example, stated that the "foremost" reason why people vote for a particular party is "social class." By the 1980s this had been challenged, with Rose and McAllister,

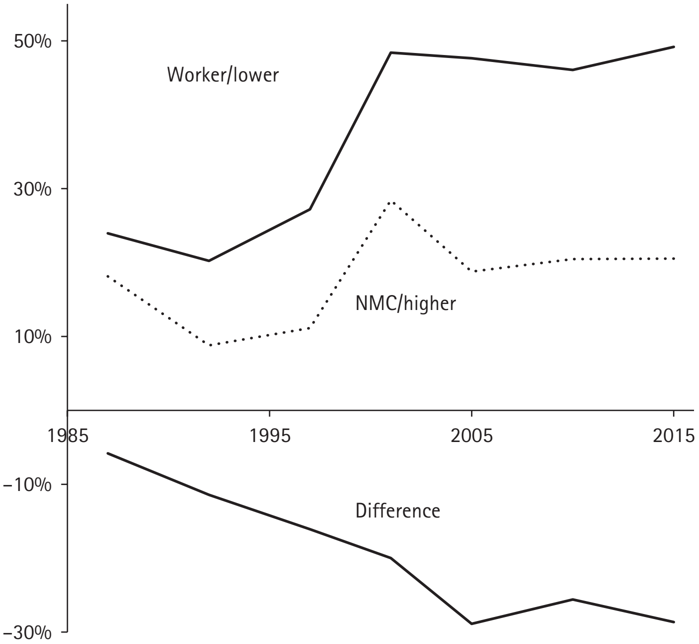

FIGURE 34.2 Non-Voting Rates by Occupational Class and Education Combined

Note: The two groups are low education and a working-class occupation and high education and a new middle-class occupation. Models are otherwise the same as those shown in Figure 34.1.

for example, arguing that the "old class-equals-party model of politics is no more" (Rose and McAllister 1986: 1). Although a number of scholars countered that class voting exhibited only "trendless fluctuation" (Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 1985: 35), by the end of the 1990s even they were forced to concede that class voting in Britain had begun to fall (Heath, Jowell, and Curtice 2001). By the 2015 election, the new middle classes were more likely to vote for Labour than the working class (Evans and Tilley 2017: 149). The challenge was explaining why class-based voting had declined. The fall was not a constant one, suggesting that it was not the result of a steady erosion of the distinctiveness of the underlying classes. Rather, it was argued that class voting varied in response to the signals sent by parties, and as Labour moved to the center, so it lost working-class voters and gained middle-class voters in their stead, resulting in a fall in class voting (Evans, Heath, and Payne 1999; Evans and Tilley 2012a; Evans and Tilley 2012b).[3]

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[3] These patterns can also be seen in comparative perspective: Elff (2009) demonstrated how the level of class voting in seven West European democracies between 1974 and 2002 was dependent upon the policy offerings of political parties, a finding confirmed by Jansen, Evans, and De Graaf (2013) in their study of 15 Western democracies from 1960 to 2005 and the case studies presented in Evans and De Graaf (2013). Similarly, in her study of cleavage voting in six West European democracies from the 1960s to the turn of the millennium, Oskarson (2005: 105) argues that "social cleavage voting must be seen as the result of an interaction between groups in society on the one hand, and the political parties and other significant political actors on the other."

The same argument generalizes for class-based non-voting. Labour was not just losing working-class supporters to another party, it was losing them to abstention (Heath 2018; Evans and Tilley 2017; Azzollini and Evans 2020). Lack of a clear signal, a lack of affinity, was depriving the working class and the less well-educated of electoral representation and they were (non)voting with their feet.

The case for this interpretation was established through various steps. In addition to showing the increasing class and educational disparities in turnout, Evans and Tilley (2017: 22–27) establish that class inequalities in objective resources had neither increased nor decreased during this period. They do so by showing that, contrary to much scholarly opinion, social class in Britain has not "dissolved" (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2001: 205). Using a wide range of government and other surveys, they highlight continuing differences among the classes in terms of income and labor market insecurity. For example, the unemployment rate for the working class is three times that of the middle class. Further, the working class are particularly vulnerable to the economic cycle; it is the working class who, when times get tough, have the least job security and are thus the first to go. They cite additional evidence which indicates that pronounced differences continue to exist between the classes in terms of educational attainment and various measures of health, including blood pressure, quality of diet, amount of exercise, psychological well-being, and ultimately mortality itself.

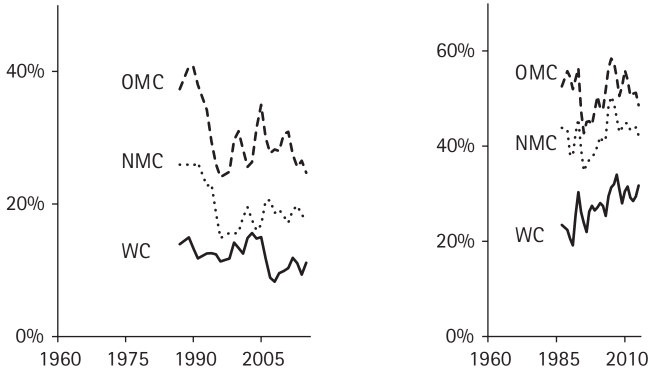
People also still *believe* class exists, despite various scholars arguing that even the notion of class identity is a "relic of a bygone age" (Eidlin 2014: 1045). Evidence from the BES and British Social Attitudes surveys show that class identity remained remarkably stable in Britain between 1964 and 2015 (Evans and Tilley 2017: 42–44). Moreover, as well as Britons recognizing that class still exists, they also consider it to still be important: just under 50 percent of Britons believed in the inevitability of class conflict in both 1963 *and* 2015 (Evans and Tilley 2017: 53–54).

Reports of the death of class have clearly been greatly exaggerated. But do different classes have distinctive views with regard to public policy? If they do, and if these preferences are not being represented by the political parties, then we may have an answer to the question as to why working-class turnout in Britain has fallen.

Beginning with economics, there is much evidence, from Britain and beyond, that the working class prefer more egalitarian policies than the middle class (see, for example, Weakliem and Heath 1994; Corneo and Grüner 2002; Lino and West 2002; Kalmijn and Kraaykamp 2007; Brooks and Svallfors 2010; Edlund and Lindh 2015; Lindh and McCall 2020).

However, much of this research considers only a single point in time. Evans and Tilley (2017: 61–66) use data covering fifty years and show that the British working class were, and remain, more opposed to privatization, more in favor of redistribution, and less opposed to unions than the middle class. There are also similar long-standing differences between the classes with regard to non-economic questions. The working class and those with the lowest levels of education are more opposed to immigration, more opposed to EU membership, more in favor of the death penalty, more in favor of stiffer sentences for criminals, and more likely to believe that homosexuality is wrong than the middle class and those with higher levels of education (Evans and Tilley 2017: 70–77). The working class and those with the least

(a) Workers benefit more than owners (b) Ordinary working people get fair share



(c) Immigration should be reduced (by class) (d) Immigration should be reduced (by education)

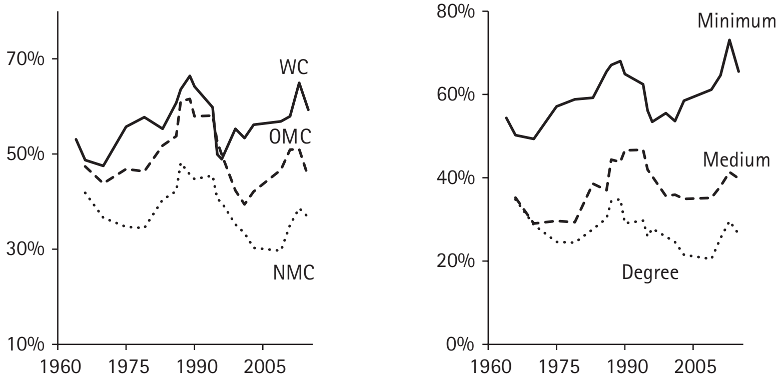


FIGURE 34.3 Views on Equality and Immigration by Class and Education

a) Workers benefit more than owners b) Ordinary working people get fair share
c) Immigration should be reduced (by class) d) Immigration should be reduced (by education)
Note: The graphs show the proportion of people who strongly agree that immigration should be reduced (two period moving average). Three educational groups are displayed in the right-hand graph: people with degree-level education (high), people with A Level equivalent education (medium), and people who left school at the minimum school leaving age for their cohort (low).

education have long held, and continue to hold, what are typically referred to as "left-authoritarian" values, as shown in Figure 34.3.

But are the distinct policy preferences of the working class and less highly educated represented politically in modern Britain? Data from the Manifesto Project on Political Representation (MARPOR) from 1945 shows that the Labour and Conservative parties' policy programs converged on the left–right economic dimension in the 1990s, particularly following the election of Tony Blair as Labour leader in 1994 (Evans and Tilley 2017: 118–119) (see Figure 34.4). This ties in with the numerous qualitative studies and expert surveys which detail Labour's rightward move under Blair.

So, while the working class continue to hold far more left-wing views than the middle class on economic issues, the Labour Party moved to the center. Further, while the working

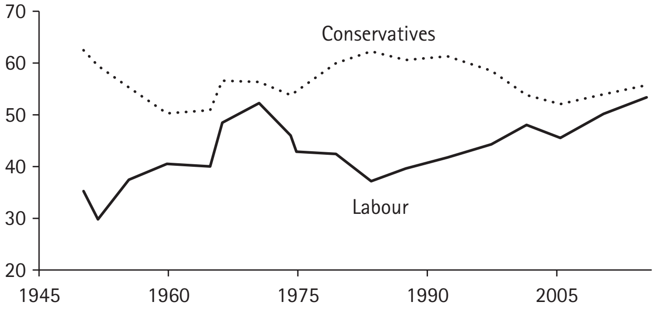


FIGURE 34.4 The Left–Right Convergence of the Parties

Note: The figure shows the positions of the two main parties on left–right policy scales; higher scores indicate more right-wing positions. It shows positions using manifesto data (two period moving average) and a procedure presented in Prosser (2014).

class were far more opposed to the EU and immigration, Labour was one of only three governments in the EU *not* to impose transitional controls on the movement of people from the ten countries joining the bloc in 2004 and had at its helm "arguably the most pro-European Prime Minister in modern times" (Cook 2003: 130).

But as well as via their policy proposals, parties can also appeal to people through group-based references. Experimental research shows that these class-based appeals are effective in mobilizing the working class, who feel that politicians making such appeals will "listen to, respect, prioritize, and care about them" (Robison et al. 2020: 19), and as a result they help determine the extent of class voting (Thau 2021).

References to the working class in Labour Party manifestoes fell from around 10 percent of group references between 1945 and 1980 to almost nothing by 2000. References to the working class in Conservative manifestoes also fell, from around 5 percent between 1945 and 1980, to levels similar to Labour by 2000 (Evans and Tilley 2017: 120). These findings have been confirmed by Thau (2019). See Figure 34.5. Appeals to the working class (by both parties) have instead been replaced by references to class-neutral notions of family and parenthood.[4]

Evans and Tilley (2017: 121) conclude that "Labour used to appeal regularly to the working class and it has stopped doing so to such a degree that there is now essentially no difference between the two parties," an assessment echoed almost verbatim by Thau (2019: 74), who describes how "[s]ince the 1970s … Labour's worker emphasis has dropped significantly to the point where the two parties are now indistinguishable".

The Labour Party under Blair thus moved away from the working class in both policy and rhetoric. But there is another form of representation: the social similarity (or lack thereof) between representatives and those they represent. Termed "descriptive representation" by Pitkin (1967), there has been much exploration of this in relation to women and ethnic

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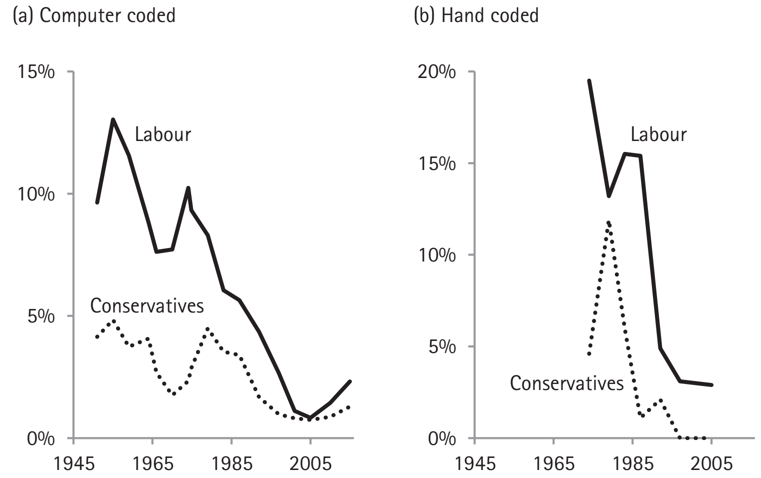
[4] Evans and Tilley also analysed specific references to different classes in leaders' speeches to their party conferences. Ironically, it is Tony Blair who invokes class most often. Does this contradict our finding above that Labour abandoned class appeals on his watch? By considering the context in which the references to class are made, we see that Blair was doing so as a means of emphasising his *rejection* of class politics. In 1999, for example, he proclaimed "[t]he class war is over"(Blair 1999).


(a) Computer coded

(b) Hand coded

FIGURE 34.5 References to "the Working Class" in Manifestos. a) Computer Coded b) Hand Coded

Note: The left-hand graph shows the percentage of group references that refer to the working class in all Labour and Conservative Party manifestos (three period moving average). These are coded directly from the Manifesto texts using Lexicoder. The right-hand graph shows the percentage of group references to the working class 1974-2005 hand-coded by Thau (2019).

minorities (see, for example, Mansbridge 1999; Campbell, Lovenduski, and Childs 2010) but, for reasons that will become clear, scholars are now beginning to consider it in relation to the working class (Mansbridge 2015; Pontusson 2015; Carnes and Lupu 2016; Elsässer and Schäfer 2020).

It is significant then that the social composition of the Parliamentary Labour Party ("PLP") has changed dramatically over the last half century. The number of Labour MPs from working-class backgrounds has fallen from around 40 percent in 1959 to just over 5 percent in more recent years (Evans and Tilley 2017: 128), with the vast majority of the fall occurring after 1992 (the number has always been extremely low for the Conservative Party). The media focused on the change in gender composition of the PLP after their 1997 landslide ("Blair's babes"); far less attention was paid to its changing class composition. Yet experimental survey research has demonstrated the importance of "demographic cues" (Popkin 1991: 64) to members of the British working class, with Vivyan and his colleagues (2020) showing that they prefer representatives from their own class and Campbell and Cowley (2014) that they are biased against wealthy candidates. Indeed, Heath (2015: 182) argues that the fall in the number of working-class Labour MPs has resulted in a greater fall in class voting in Britain than the policy changes inaugurated during "Labour's long march to the centre instigated by Neil Kinnock."

This concern with descriptive representation is far from irrational. Studies have demonstrated that descriptive representation has implications for substantive (i.e., policy-based) representation. O'Grady (2019: 569), for example, has shown that British Labour MPs from working-class backgrounds were more likely to rebel against Tony Blair's welfare reforms than careerist politicians, leading him to conclude that "the large shift from working-class MPs to career politicians in the British Labour Party considerably weakened the representation of working-class voters' interests." Elsewhere, Carnes has shown that American representatives from different class backgrounds vote differently (Carnes 2012), and Hayo and Neumeier (2012: 493) that the composition of public spending in German Laender varies depending on the class of the prime minister, with "lower-class prime ministers spend[ing] significantly more on public safety, education, research and development, social security, health, and infrastructure."

The result of all of these changes was a sharp fall in the degree to which Britons believed that Labour advanced the interests of the working class—indeed in 2001 they believed that the middle class was better represented by Labour than the working class. The Conservatives, meanwhile, continued to be viewed as representing middle-class interests (Evans and Tilley 2017: 132). Unsurprisingly perhaps, BES panel data reveal that just 10 percent of the new middle class who voted for Labour in 1997 did not vote in 2001, compared to nearly a quarter of working-class people who voted for Labour in 1997. Similarly, 9 percent of the working class who voted for Labour in 2005 abstained in 2010, compared to just 1 percent of the new middle class who voted for Labour in 2005 (Evans and Tilley 2017: 175–176). More recently, Azzollini and Evans (2020) confirmed the hypothesis that policy convergence on both the left–right redistributive and liberal–authoritarian dimensions in Britain has resulted in falling turnout among the working class. Thus, as Evans and Tilley (2017: 170) put it, " 'Class *voting* may have disappeared, but class *non-voting* is stronger than ever [emphasis in original]."

Similar patterns can also be discerned in the USA. Just as Labour followed the Democratic Party's earlier move to the center in America in its efforts to become a "catch-all" party (Kirchheimer 1966), so it has reaped the same harvest: office, but at the cost of its core supporters, who, having been abandoned by their party, have in turn abandoned both their party and politics more generally. Weakliem and Heath (1999) show that Democratic voters became markedly more middle class from the 1960s, as the party moved to the center of the political spectrum. The social composition of the Republican vote meanwhile stayed remarkably similar, the end result being that "class differences [in turnout] between the two major parties have decreased, while class differences between major party voters and nonvoters have increased" (Weakliem and Heath 1999: 120). Hill and Leighley (1996) show that working-class turnout at the sub-national, state-level likewise alters depending upon the policies of the state-level Democratic Party. This supply-side explanation for the drop in working-class turnout in America during this period is echoed by Vanneman and Cannon (1987: 165–166): "It is U.S. nonvoters who hold the same position as the British Labour Party; the United States does not offer a party to capture the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. Throughout the industrialized West, these workers vote for the Left . . . The United States has no leftist party, so these workers sit out."

CONCLUSIONS

We hope we have shown the limitations of considering only one half of the political participation equation, that is to say, focusing solely on bottom-up/demand-side factors and ignoring the top-down/supply-side activities of political parties and politicians. In the British case, recent work highlights that it was not just Labour's policy shifts that alienated working-class voters and caused them to withdraw from politics, but also the gentrification of the parliamentary party and the fall in the number of rhetorical appeals to the class it was founded to represent. The somewhat less extensive research on these matters in other countries suggests it likely that similar trends and consequences can be observed elsewhere.

Sartori (1969: 90) compared the bottom up/demand-size approach to "explaining an economic system as if there could be buyers without sellers." Like Sartori, many years ago, we would urge a move from the sociology of politics to political sociology, as where the former "deals with the consumer and ignores the producer," the latter examines "the cycle from both ends, from the producer's no less than from the consumer's end" (Sartori 1969: 90). Thus, in studying political participation we must employ a pincer movement: both top down and bottom up. We must pay attention both to the supply side (producers/parties) and the demand side (consumers/voters). Thus, with apologies to Skocpol, we can summarize our approach as "bringing the party back in."

We end with a call for further research into one particularly important question: whether those working-class citizens who no longer participate can be brought back into the political fold. Again, we would suggest both a top-down and bottom-up approach be used. Initial consideration of the top-down/political parties side is not promising. Office-seeking parties are naturally more interested in voters than non-voters, and the abstention of the working class is therefore likely to lead to increased disregard from political parties, which in turn is likely to lead to greater abstention (a vicious circle par excellence). The preliminary view from the bottom-up/voter perspective is hardly more encouraging. Research suggests that voting is habitual and that once lost the habit is not easily recovered (Aldrich, Montgomery, and Wood 2011). Further, Azzollini and Evans (2020) show that it is the younger members of the working class who are most likely to abstain in times of ideological convergence. Building on a substantial body of research (see, for example, Grasso 2016; Grasso et al. 2019) which indicates that political attitudes and behaviors learnt in these early, impressionable years—from the mid-teens to the mid-twenties—persist, this suggests that the class gap in turnout is unlikely to close in the foreseeable future.

However, evidence from the UK's 2016 EU referendum shows that—in certain circumstances—the working class and least educated *will* return to the voting booths. While there was still a difference in turnout at the referendum between highly-educated professionals and working-class people with low levels of education, it was half the size of the gap at the preceding 2015 general election (Evans and Tilley 2017: 205). Similarly, research (see, for example, Grasso and Giugni 2015; Grasso and Giugni 2016) on the anti-austerity protests and demonstrations of recent years shows a rise in participation among the working class and less educated.

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CHAPTER 35

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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Studies of race/ethnicity as determinants of participation in the United States over the past several decades have shifted from documenting differences in the levels of participation across racial/ethnic groups to understanding more fully the processes and mechanisms that account for such differences. Traditional participation models have focused on socioeconomic status and political mobilization differences to account for aggregate participation variations across groups. More recent studies focus on racial identity as moderating the effects of these factors, and the distinctive importance of non-traditional (non-partisan, non-electoral) institutions in mobilizing—and sometimes, demobilizing—participation. We provide an overview of these developments, noting that acquiring valid, systematic data on race/ethnicity and participation across groups is essential to a descriptive understanding of the relevance of race/ethnicity to participation, as well as to rigorously evaluating theories that account for observed differences in participation across racial/ethnic groups. We conclude that recent studies of the processes and mechanisms that account for participatory differences across racial and ethnic groups underscore the participation decisions of minority individuals as uniquely reflecting the costs and benefits imposed by the broader political and historical contexts in addition to the typical individual-level factors considered in standard participation models.

We also conclude that theoretically motivated research studies developed in the United States to explain variation in ethnic and racial mobilization are rarely generalizable to other countries because they rely on country-specific institutions, histories, cleavages, and policies. For example, theories of racial hierarchy, group consciousness, and party mobilization and integration may not hold absent these contextual factors because ethnic and racial identities are either esoteric or politically irrelevant without a nuanced understanding of country-specific histories and contexts.

We primarily focus on race and ethnicity in the context of American politics for two reasons. First, many theories seeking to understand the role that race and ethnicity play in shaping political participation were pioneered in the context of American politics. Second, our research expertise in, and more comprehensive knowledge of, American politics allows us to draw more nuanced arguments regarding the complex relationships of race/ethnicity, social and political context, and individual behavior. However, we use a limited comparative framework, with a focus on Western Europe, to highlight our broader argument, while keeping crucial factors such as democratic ideals, economic development, and fundamental legal institutions constant. We recognize, of course, that the history of ethnic cleavages, the political power-sharing structure, micro-institutions, and racial, immigration, and assimilation policies vary even among countries within Western Europe. Countries across Western Europe grapple with diverse histories of linguistic and regional divisions, patterns of colonization, and cultural norms, among other things, that shape racial and ethnic hierarchies and draw cleavages across distinct identities.

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND PARTICIPATION: THE EMPIRICAL RECORD

One of the biggest challenges in advancing the study of the political behavior of racial/ethnic minorities in the United States is the limited number of data sets that include a sufficient number of respondents across multiple racial/ethnic groups to allow for appropriate analysis. The Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) provides the longest time series documenting self-reported voting in presidential and midterm elections by race and ethnicity. The CPS surveys a broad sample of households including respondents from dorms, military barracks, and prisons. Figure 35.1 includes voter turnout rates for non-Hispanic Whites, non-Hispanic Blacks, Hispanics, and an aggregated category for other racial groups (including Asian Americans and Native Americans) from 1986 to 2018. A clear pattern

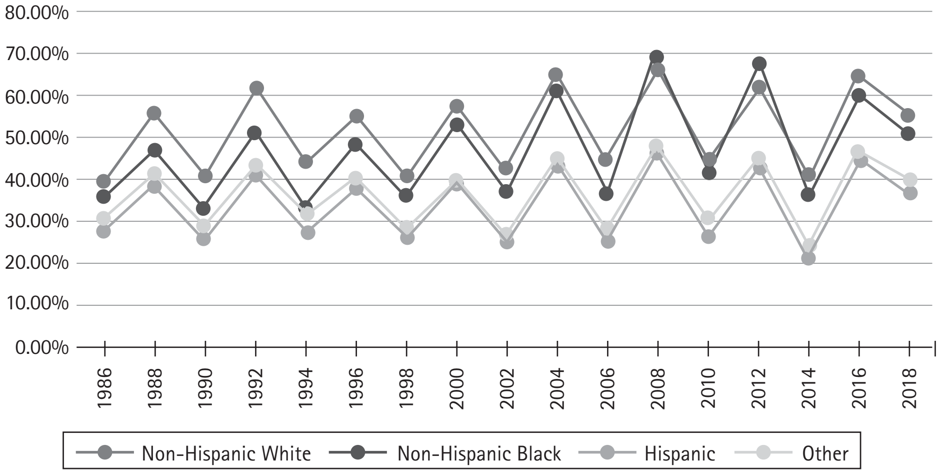

FIGURE 35.1 Voting Age Population Turnout Rates by Race/Ethnicity

observed here is the persistent gap in turnout of about 20 percentage points—with White Americans and Black Americans turning out to vote at higher rates, relative to Latinos and those defined as "others" (many of whom are Asian Americans) both in presidential and midterm election years.[1]

Turning now to participation in non-voting activities, we note that few surveys in the United States provide large enough samples of racial and ethnic minorities to study differences in these participation patterns. Among the few exceptions are the American National Election Studies (ANES), the Cooperative Congressional Elections Study (CCES), and the Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey (CMPS). The CMPS offers advantages over the ANES and CCES in that it is specifically designed to include a large and representative sample of both registered (to vote) and non-registered citizens across racial/ethnic origin groups. The 2016 CMPS had more than 10,000 respondents with greater diversity in respondents' racial/ethnic origins and was conducted in a greater number of languages than the ANES and CCES. For these reasons, we focus on the 2016 CMPS here.

As shown in Figure 35.2, participation in signing petitions and discussing politics on social media is relatively high compared to other types of participation. White Americans and Black Americans report signing petitions at higher rates than do Latinos and Asian Americans. A gap between Asian Americans and White Americans in discussing politics on social media is evident, while White Americans are more likely to contact officials and contribute money than are Latinos, Black Americans, and Asian Americans.

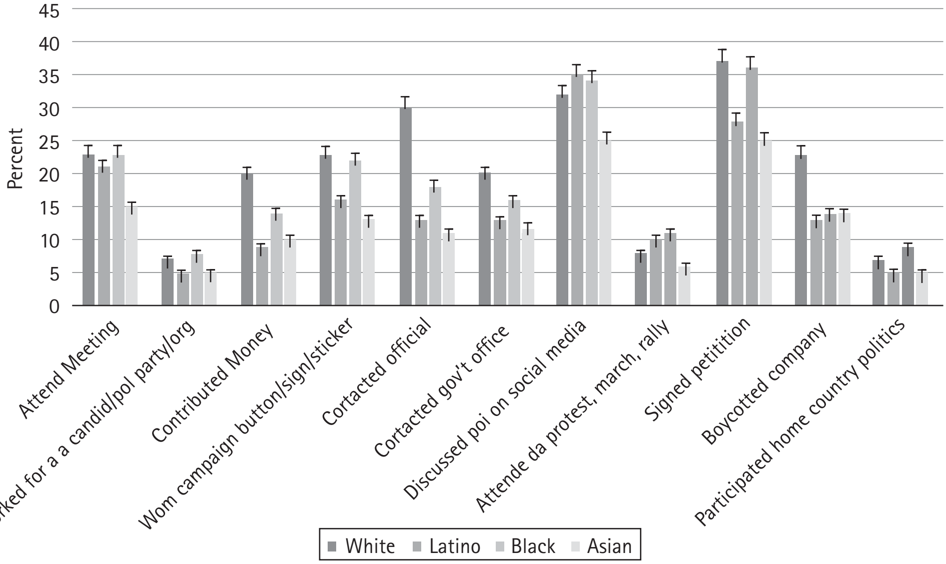

FIGURE 35.2 Non-Electoral Population by Race/Ethnicity

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[1] For discussions of the racial divide in electoral turnout, see Abrajano and Alvarez (2012), Fraga (2018), Garcia Bedolla and Michelson (2012), and Leighley and Nagler (2013).

The activity where individuals participate least, regardless of their race/ethnicity, is volunteering or working for a presidential campaign. Only 2.4 percent of Whites, 2.9 percent of Latinos and 4.8 percent of Black Americans report engaging in this type of activity. The largest gap in participation levels is observed for leaving political comments on a message board or internet site, which about 11 percent of White Americans report doing, compared to slightly just under half the percentage of Latinos (6.1%) Latinos and Black Americans (6.9%) who report doing so.

These self-reported turnout and participation patterns are similar when using other data sources such as the ANES or CCES, and together confirm the general claim that participation levels in the United States are marked by important differences across racial/ethnic groups. Most indicators suggest that Whites generally vote, contact elected officials, donate money, and engage online at higher rates than other racial and ethnic groups, though turnout differences between Black Americans and Whites are sometimes quite small. One notable exception to this pattern is that data from the 2012 CMPS and 2012 ANES suggest that in 2012, Black Americans voted, volunteered, or worked for presidential campaigns, and donated to presidential candidates, at higher rates than Whites. Another important exception to the generalization that Whites participate at higher levels than other racial/ethnic groups is that Black Americans and Latinos attend protests, rallies, and marches at higher rates than Whites and Asian Americans. Across racial/ethnic minorities, Black Americans' participation rates are typically higher than those for Latino and Asian Americans, with data from most surveys suggesting that Asian Americans generally participate at lower rates than other groups.

The general conclusion that racial/ethnic minorities participate less than Whites is but one of many challenges to democratic politics in the United States today. Importantly, a comparative perspective suggests that racial and ethnic minority status is not "inherently" associated with lower levels of political participation. In contrast to our empirical evidence on the United States, there does not appear to be a consistent role that ethnicity and race play in shaping political participation in Western Europe. While some scholars contend that ethnicity plays a central role in shaping variation in political participation across Western Europe (Simonsen 2020), the role of ethnicity as a determinant of political participation in the region remains an open question. Sandovici and Listhaug (2010) use the European Social Survey to study participation gaps in 21 countries across eight varied activities including voting, contacting a politician, boycotting a product, and participating in illegal protests. They find that there are only participation gaps between minority ethnic groups and the majoritarian ethnic group in terms of voting. They do not find participation gaps in the seven other political activities they examine. Gallego (2007), also using the European Social Survey, comes to a similar conclusion: ethnic-minority status is not clearly associated with lower levels of political participation when controlling for other covariates in Western Europe. Taken altogether, these studies suggest that few consistent patterns exist across countries in the region and that country-specific factors are critical in shaping differential patterns in political participation among racial and ethnic minorities.

These studies illustrate one of our key arguments: differential patterns in political participation among minority racial and ethnic groups are a result of complex historical, institutional, and contextual factors, and therefore vary across time and place. We argue that both the differences in participation patterns across groups, as well as the variations we observe from year to year, reflect that participation of racial and ethnic groups is socially and politically mobilized differently across elections and over time. We now review the development of theories and evidence analyzing these differences to substantiate this claim.

RACE/ETHNICITY AND MODELS OF PARTICIPATION

The consideration of demographics as determinants of political behavior has been a dominant approach in the social sciences for nearly a century. Ray Wolfinger and Steven Rosenstone's study of turnout in the 1972 presidential campaign, updated and expanded by Leighley and Nagler (2014) is an early exemplar of the field's focus on demographics and voter turnout (for a cross-national perspective, see Chapter 34). Leighley and Nagler highlight the important distinction between bivariate differences in White/Black and Hispanic/non-Hispanic turnout differences[2] and race/ethnic differences *controlling for other demographic characteristics*. The latter approach reflects the greater theoretical development and analytical emphasis on education and income as predictors of turnout and participation. Controlling for education and income, Leighley and Nagler find that Black Americans are more likely to vote than Whites, but that Hispanics are less likely to vote than Whites.[3]

Leighley and Nagler's findings underscore the limitations of the "socioeconomic status" model, in that they raise the continued question of what accounts for the differences between Black and White turnout, or between Hispanic and non-Hispanic turnout, after controlling for socioeconomic status. Similarly, studies of Asian American turnout and participation often report the inconsistent pattern that "even though" Asian Americans (as a group) report higher levels of education and income, they report participating less than other racial/ethnic groups (Wong et al. 2011a). These inconsistencies—observed over many data sets and years—have led scholars of racial/ethnic politics to develop alternative models of turnout and participation, many of which focus on their distinct experiences as marginalized and stigmatized groups (Garcia Bedolla and Michelson 2012; Wong et al 2011b). Both of these works confirm the importance of education and income in understanding who votes, but also affirm that understanding variations in turnout across race/ethnicity requires attention to alternative factors that influence turnout—else why do we observe different levels of turnout for Black Americans and Latinos controlling for education and income?

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's (1995) "Civic Voluntarism" model posits that participating in political acts beyond voting reflects individuals' resources, (psychological) engagement, and recruitment (through both political and non-political networks). They find that time, money, and skills are necessary for political engagement, while psychological engagement such as political interest *alone* is inadequate. They also report that once resources, engagement, and recruitment are controlled for, Black Americans and Latinos participate in non-voting participation at the same level as Whites (p. 523). This is early, important evidence that differences in participation levels across racial/ethnic groups reflect variations in the economic, social, and psychological resources that typically vary across these groups, with variations elaborated on distinctly in subsequent group-specific studies.

For example, studies of Latino and Asian American political participation also consider factors associated with immigrant generation, country of origin differences, and family/

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[2] Where Whites and non-Hispanics vote at higher rates than non-Whites and Hispanics throughout the period—a "dummy variable" approach to measuring race/ethnicity.

[3] Shaw, de la Garza, and Lee (2000) examine Latino turnout in 1996, reporting lower turnout of Latinos as well as the importance of contacting as a determinant of Latino turnout.

social networks as either direct or indirect influences on participation levels. [For Latinos, see Abrajano and Alvarez 2012; Barreto 2007; Barreto and Nuño 2011; Bueker 2013; Carlson et al. 2020; DeFrancesco and Merolla 2006; Leal 2002; 2002; Leighley and Nagler 2016; Levin 2013; Michelson 2000; Pantoja, Ramirez, and Segura 2001; White 2016; For Asian Americans, see Chan 2020; Cho 1999; Jang 2009; Lien 2017, 2010; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001; Ramakrishnan and Shah 2016; Wong, Lien, and Conway 2008; Wong et al. 2011a, 2011b].

Studies of Black American non-voting participation tend to reflect general arguments regarding socioeconomic status, discussing in greater deal the distinctive consequences of poverty for political engagement, and examine engagement in protest behavior, often drawing on the historical context of the civil rights movement (Cohen and Dawson 1993; Gillion 2020; Grumbach and Sahn 2020; Harris, Sinclair-Chapman, and McKenzie 2005; McKee, Hood, and Hill 2012; Tate 1991).

Despite Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's conclusion that group consciousness is not associated with participation, Dawson (1994) argued that "linked fate" (similar to social psychology's "common fate") is what leads (increasingly class-diverse) Black Americans to the maintenance of ideological and partisan homogeneity. In response to Dawson's work, research on minority political participation shifted from a focus on demographics to a variety of attitudinal factors unique to, or reflecting the distinctive experiences of, racial/ethnic minorities in United States society (see, for example, Bonilla and Tillery 2020; Jang 2009; Masuoka 2008; Valdez 2011). More recently, studies of Black American participation recognize the importance of consciousness, or group identity, but also consider emotions as a stimulus of political engagement (see, for example, Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019; White and Laird 2020). Group consciousness, particularly as a tool of political mobilization, appears to only be present in groups that share a common history of disenfranchisement and marginalization. For example, studies suggest that group consciousness may mobilize Latinos and Asian Americans but does so less strongly compared to Black Americans, likely because these pan-ethnic identities do not capture shared experiences with discrimination as strongly as Black identification does (Wong, Lien, and Conway 2005).

Studies examining the link between group consciousness or linked fate and political participation in Western Europe highlight the significance of shared experiences with state disenfranchisement in the formation of politicized group consciousness. Laniyonu (2018) finds that Blacks in Great Britain demonstrate racial group consciousness but generally have lower levels of linked fate than Black Americans in the United States. Also, greater levels of racial group identity are linked with lower voter turnout in both countries, while perceptions of marginalization are linked to greater voter participation rates in the United States but not in Britain (Laniyonu 2019; but see Giugni and Grasso 2019a). Again, these studies suggest that theories, even those based on general psychological and rational principles, do not easily translate across borders and identity cleavages.

Recruitment and Mobilization

The third factor identified by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) as a determinant of political participation is also affirmed in more recent studies of recruitment and mobilization efforts targeting racial/ethnic minorities (also see Chapter 41). Importantly, their research reveals that Black Americans are more likely than Latinos and Whites to be recruited via their engagement in church communities, and that these recruitment efforts are effective in equalizing participation across racial/ethnic groups. Historically Latinos have not had the same level of established, politicized recruitment networks as experienced by Black Americans, perhaps a reflection of the national origin, immigrant experiences, and citizenship diversity of the community, or their unique social or political experiences. However, the increasing salience and political conflicts associated with immigration and other issues experienced by the Latino community has made more evident the potential of formal and informal mobilization efforts targeting Latinos as being successful in increasing Latino turnout and participation (Barreto and Nuño 2011; Levin 2013; Martinez 2010; Oberholzer-Gee and Waldfogel 2009; Pantoja, Ramirez, and Segura 2001; Parkin and Zlotnick 2011; Ramakrishnan and Espenshade 2001; White 2016; on non-partisan recruitment, see Ramírez 2007).

Because of the increased significance of immigration in the ethnic diversification of Western Europe, several studies on ethnic political participation have focused on the role of voluntary ethnic associations in mobilizing ethnic minorities. Studies in the United States often find that membership in voluntary associations is linked with increased political participation, particularly for ethnic and racial minorities (Leighley 2001; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Scholzman and Brady 1995). In some instances, these theories developed in the United States appear to generalize across borders (See, for example, Eggert and Giugni 2010; Giugni and Grasso 2019b; Yurdakul 2006; 2009). Yet in France, where immigration policies are dominated by principles of assimilation and an opposition to cultural diversity, ethnically based voluntary associations were illegal until the 1980s. Because of assimilation-oriented policies and cultures, North African organizations in France appear to largely avoid directly engaging in political issues (Hamidi 2003).

Party mobilization appears to be important as parties systematically reach out to racial/ethnic minorities at lower rates than to Whites. This pattern reflects, in part, political parties targeting individuals who voted previously (high propensity voters) in Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) campaigns (see Enos, Fowler and Vavreck 2014). This creates a self-reinforcing dynamic for racial/ethnic groups such as Latinos and Asian Americans who tend to vote less or less consistently, and thus have larger proportions of low-propensity voters and are less likely to be targeted by partisan organizations (Abrajano et al 2020; Abrajano and Panagopoulos 2011; García Bedolla and Michelson 2012). Garcia Bedolla and Michelson (2012) contend that the key to mobilizing low-propensity voters of color is a psychological shift in how they see their place and position in the polity; instead of thinking of themselves as politically marginalized members, they need to view themselves as central to the polity. They argue that only in-person, interactive contact exerts enough power to cause the internal cognitive shifts necessary to change a low-propensity voter's behavior on Election Day. Other studies of GOTV effort have shifted to studying the specific features of mobilization efforts unique to Latinos (e.g., language, co-ethnic contact, non-partisan groups) that might make recruitment efforts more effective (Abrajano and Panagopoulos 2011; Barreto and Nuno 2011; Matland and Murray 2012; Michelson 2003; Ramirez 2007; see also Nickerson 2015).

Several other features of the political system or context are also identified as important to understanding participation of racial/ethnic groups. For example, Bobo and Gilliam's (1990) analysis of turnout in mayoral elections showed that Black Americans were more likely to vote in cities where Black Americans held elected positions. Subsequent studies elaborated on the particular mechanisms (e.g., higher levels of efficacy of, or greater GOTV efforts targeting, Black Americans) accounting for this increased turnout and sought to examine the argument at different election levels (i.e., local or state; see Gay 2001, Keele, Shah, White, and Kay 2017). Studies of Latino and Black American turnout have also examined the extent to which party-contacting efforts, the existence of Latino candidates and residing in majority/minority districts might increase turnout levels (Barreto, Seguro, and Woods 2004; Barreto 2007; DeFrancesco Soto and Merolla 2006; Stevens and Bishin 2011; on Asian Americans, see Sadwani 2020). This evidence suggests that these aspects of the electoral system can either increase or reduce group-specific differences in voting.

More recently, the impact of state election laws on minority turnout has been highlighted in studies of photo identification requirements for voting. Findings on the direct effects of photo identification requirements on Black Americans, Latinos, and other minorities are somewhat mixed (see Burden 2018; Grimmer et al. 2018; Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017; Hajnal, Kuk, and Lajerardi 2018; Rocha and Matsubayashi 2014). While methodological choices and data inaccuracies have partially led to divergent results, these mixed findings also reflect that the adoption and politicization of these laws often triggers a counter-mobilization effort which is likely to minimize the actual negative effects of the laws (Valentino and Neuner 2017). Incorporating these features of the political environment as explanations of differences across racial/ethnic groups underscores the extent to which thinking about race/ethnicity as leading to lower or greater turnout is seriously limited, as the relevance and effect of race/ethnicity is a reflection of the political system within which any individual "chooses" to vote/participate (or not). We expand on this observation in the following section.

RACE/ETHNICITY AND POLITICS—OR POLITICS AND RACE/ETHNICITY?

The accumulated research discussed in this chapter demonstrates the critical recognition that the participatory differences observed across racial/ethnic groups reflects not just resource differences across groups, but also systemic differences in elite recruitment, mobilization, and features of the electoral system. Here we argue that the distinctive political experiences of racial/ethnic minorities within the political system leads to important attitudinal differences in minorities' identification with democracy, citizenship, and inclusion. These experiences and attitudes also contribute to explaining participatory differences across racial/ethnic groups over time and elections. Accordingly, we suggest that race/ethnicity is not "just" a self-reported demographic characteristic, but also an identity that is determined in part by our politics. We elaborate on these ideas in this section by discussing relevant research.

Scholars have typically viewed disparities in political participation as a *cause of*, not a *consequence of*, discriminatory government policies and practices. Yet recent research suggests that everyday interactions with street-level bureaucrats teach lessons that reinforce the racial hierarchy and shape the political identities of historically disenfranchized racial and ethnic groups (for examples, see Bruch and Soss 2018; Lerman and Weaver 2014; Soss 1999; Weaver and Lerman 2010). Soss (1999), for instance, finds that recipients of Aid for Family and Dependent

Children (AFDC) are less likely to vote than non-welfare recipients, even when controlling for socioeconomic status, and that recipients view government as a whole as an extension of the welfare office (also see Michener's 2018 study of Medicaid participants). Similarly, disparities in K-12 education practices and policies exacerbate racial gaps in political participation because Black and Latino students are more likely to have negative experiences with authority figures in government-sponsored roles (Bruch and Soss 2018: 37).

The carceral state—the set of confinement and criminal justice institutions including prisons, jails, police departments, judges, parole officers, etc.—is another institution that shapes racial and ethnic political participation (Burch 2013; Kang and Dawes 2017; Soss and Weaver 2017; Walker 2014; Walker 2020). Felon disenfranchizement laws are the most direct barrier to democratic participation (Uggen and Manza 2002; Haselswerdt 2009). Weaver and Lerman (2010) and Lerman and Weaver (2014) find that all levels of police contact, ranging from police stops to prison convictions, are demobilizing. They argue that negative experiences with law enforcement teach political lessons that are antagonistic to democratic participation, with more serious or prolonged contact correlated with more intense democratic alienation. Moreover, perceptions of unjust criminal justice practices can mobilize people of color beyond the voting booth as well (Williamson, Trump, and Einstein 2018; Walker 2020). and Walker (2020). Such was the case in the United States, where thousands of protests emerged throughout the country in the summer of 2020 in response to the racial violence and killing of unarmed Black men at the hands of law enforcement.

Research on the effects of carceral state and policing practices on political participation conducted in the United States appear to partially generalize to the United Kingdom because the United Kingdom adopted and borrowed a broad set of policies from the United States (Newburn 2002). For example, Laniyonu (2018), using panel data from three metropolitan areas in the United Kingdom, finds that communities that experienced greater levels of quality-of-life policing had lower levels of voter turnout when controlling for other covariates. These effects appear to be moderated by the percentage of Asians, Blacks, and Muslims in the community, as more aggressive policing practices were associated with lower voter turnout primarily in neighborhoods with larger ethnic minority populations.

However, these findings may not generalize in other places because they do not share similar ethnic cleavages, policing practices, and political contexts. For example, various recent studies in Spain have aimed to understand the relationship between policing, political participation, and ethnic conflict but through drastically different frames because historical linguistic and regional divisions have largely defined ethnic conflict in Spain—not racial hierarchies—and ethnically based social movements have often pursued a separatist agenda (Medrano 1994; see also Rodon and Guinjoan 2020). Thus, it is important to note that the inherent differences in the histories, contexts, policies, social movements, and ethnic/racial cleavages between the United States and Spain provide limited common ground for the findings to speak to each other.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we first provided an overview of the racial dynamics of political participation in the United States by examining data on voter turnout and political participation. We provide evidence that racial and ethnic minorities participate in politics at lower rates than Whites, although there are numerous exceptions to this general observation. We argued that lower levels of participation by racial/ethnic minorities reflects variations in resources and experiences with the political system. These latter findings suggest that addressing these systemic differences might allow for the possibility of fewer participatory differences across groups in the coming years.

Our emphasis on the systemic factors that often lead to lower levels of participation of racial/ethnic minorities emphasizes the importance of understanding that one cannot think of participation differences across racial/ethnic groups without explicitly recognizing the particular ways that the political system—its institutions, agencies, and policies—have an influence on those participation levels. In this respect, participation differences across racial/ethnic groups are endogenous to the political system under study.

New data sources and empirical techniques have led to a better understanding of the causes of racial/ethnic disparities in political participation rates. Recent efforts to conduct large-scale surveys on specific racial/minority groups, or to oversample racial and ethnic minorities in general population surveys, allow for better powered statistical tests that are required to tease out illusive but important factors shaping racial/ethnic minority participation. For example, the CMPS has allowed researchers to better understand the role of linked fate in shaping racial/ethnic participation (see Berry, Ebner, and Cornelius 2019; Marsh and Ramirez 2019).

We emphasize again that scholars interested in studying race/ethnicity in cross-national settings must keep in mind that race is a social construction (Omi and Winant 1994). That is, how societies conceive of racial categories and structures is a function of their unique sociopolitical histories and processes. In societies where the dominant cleavage centers on class or religion, for instance, the role that race plays in the political arena is likely distinctive from the role of race/ethnicity in societies where the dominant cleavage centers on race/ethnicity. Thus, the relationships between race, ethnicity and participation in these two different contexts must be carefully assessed.[4] Our discussion of studies on race conducted in Western European countries provides an important reminder of the dangers in overgeneralizing what we know about race across geographical boundaries. The history of slavery, legal segregation, and discrimination in the United States means that race has always been and continues to be a key cleavage that structures and dominates the social, economic, and political realms of our society. This particular context is important to consider when generalizing conclusions based on studies conducted in the United States to other settings.

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[4] As Chapter 42 discusses, it is also important to recognize how intersectional identities can affect these relationships.

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CHAPTER 36

PERSONALITY, MOTIVES, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

KATHRIN ACKERMANN

Within recent decades, we have seen a growing interest in the psychological foundations of political behavior. Studying political action through the lens of psychology enriches our understanding of how and why ordinary citizens engage in politics (see Chapters 4 and 9 by Duncan, and by Renström and Bäck in this volume). Personality traits, values, norms, motives, and emotions drive individual behavior in all kinds of situations, from private interaction over behavior in working life to political behavior (see Chapters 37, 38 and 39 by Heath et al., Jasper and Zhelnina and Nai in this volume). Considering these psychological aspects in the study of political action enables us to dig deeper into inter-individual differences in civic engagement. The idea can be traced back to the Civic Voluntarism Model (CVM) (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995), which is still one of the standard models to explain participation. Summarizing their argument, Brady and co-authors (1995: 271) write that people do not take part in politics "because they can't, because they do not want or because they are not asked". While the first part refers to resources and the last part to networks, the psychological argument lies in the middle: some people want to take part in politics, while others do not want to. Verba and colleagues (1995: 272) call this prerequisite of political participation "psychological engagement with politics". In the CVM, psychological engagement is limited to motives that drive participation. In light of recent research from political psychology, it is worthwhile to broaden the perspective and incorporate personality traits as more general psychological factors into the analysis of political action (Mondak 2010: 177). Within trait theory, personality traits are "dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions" (McCrae and Costa 2003: 25). Meanwhile, motives can be understood as "the specific reasons for action" (Franzese 2013: 281). Thus, in participation research, motives describe concrete reasons, like political interest or norms, which push people into politics (Giugni and Grasso 2019).

In this chapter, I will focus on personality traits as general and motives as specific psychological foundations of political participation. I will summarize conceptual and theoretical approaches as well as empirical findings. Furthermore, I will discuss the interaction of individual psychological factors and contextual surroundings and present original empirical evidence on this.

The Concept of Personality

Following Caprara and Vecchione (2013), personality is a "dynamic system of psychological structures and processes that mediates the relationship between the individual and the environment and accounts for what a person is and may become." Psychological research offers different approaches to personality. Trait theory, which has found its way into the study of political behavior, assumes that traits form the core of an individual's personality and have to be distinguished from less stable factors, like habits, values, or attitudes (Allport 1931). Building on the so-called lexical approach, which argues that important personality differences are reflected in our everyday language, five clusters or superior traits ("Big Five") have been identified and confirmed in numerous studies. Their names largely persist until today: Openness to Experience (earlier name: Culture), Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (or its counterpart: Emotional Stability). According to the Five-Factor Model (FFM) by Costa and McCrae (1992), each trait is described by six facets, as shown in Table 36.1. The facets can also function as short descriptions of the traits' substance.

The FFM has been validated using different methods as well as peer-ratings and observer-ratings (McCrae and Costa 1987). Furthermore, studies have shown that it persists across different countries and cultures (e.g., McCrae and Costa 1997). Concerning intrapersonal stability, traits can be understood as "relatively stable" (McCrae and Costa 2008: 167) over the life course, given their biological basis. Yet, psychological research shows that processes of maturation and life experiences can lead to changes in personality (e.g., Specht et al. 2011).

Personality and Political Participation

In the study of personality and politics, political participation plays a prominent role. Scholars have found that psychological dispositions are relevant correlates of political action and can enrich the standard models to explain civic engagement (Cawvey et al. 2017; Mondak 2010). From a theoretical point of view, it is particularly fruitful to take the nature of different forms of participation into account when thinking about the explanatory power of personality traits (Mondak 2010: 177). As psychological research suggests, personality traits have a motivational core and—at least partly—relate to basic motivational systems of approach and avoidance (Corr et al. 2013). Thus, we can argue that individuals are likely to choose the form of political participation that caters to their psychological needs.

Theoretical expectations and empirical findings are particularly clear-cut for two traits that seem to be the strongest correlates of political action: openness to experience and extraversion. Individuals scoring high on *openness to experience* will participate in politics if it promises new input, new experiences, and intellectual stimuli. Thus, they might particularly value forms of participation that have an unconventional and innovative character, for instance online participation, political protests, and deliberative citizen assemblies

Table 36.1 The Five-Factor Model of Personality (FFM)

Trait	Short Definition	Facets
Openness to Experience	"[…] describes the breadth, depth, originality, and complexity of an individual's mental and experiential life." (John et al. 2008: 138)	Fantasy Aesthetics Feelings Actions Ideas Values
Conscientiousness	"[…] describes socially prescribed impulse control that facilitates task- and goal-oriented behavior […]" (John et al. 2008: 138)	Competence Order Dutifulness Achievement Striving Self-Discipline Deliberation
Extraversion	"[…] implies an energetic approach toward the social and material world […] "(John et al. 2008: 138)	Warmth Gregariousness Assertiveness Activity Excitement Seeking Positive Emotions
Agreeableness	"[…] contrasts a prosocial and communal orientation toward others with antagonism […] "(John et al. 2008: 138)	Trust Straightforwardness Altruism Compliance Modesty Tender-Mindedness
Neuroticism	"[…] contrasts emotional stability and even-temperedness with negative emotionality […] "(John et al. 2008: 138)	Anxiety Angry Hostility Depression Self-Consciousness Impulsiveness Vulnerability

Source*:* Ackermann (2017b), based on John et al. (2008).

(Mondak and Halperin 2008: 342). Traditional forms of participation, like voting, might be less appealing to individuals scoring high on openness. Empirical findings are largely in accordance with these expectations. Openness to experience and various forms of political action are significantly positively associated (Gerber et al. 2011; Ha et al. 2013; Mondak 2010; Mondak et al. 2010; Russo and Amnå 2016b). In particular, openness to experience is a strong correlate of non-electoral political participation (Ackermann 2017a; Ackermann and Gundelach 2020; Brandstätter and Opp 2014; Lindell and Strandberg 2018). Meanwhile, the findings for voting are mixed and some studies could not prove significant links between openness to experience and turnout (Gerber et al. 2011; Weinschenk 2013).

Individuals that show high levels of *extraversion* should particularly enjoy social forms of political action. They value political participation as an opportunity for interaction. Thus, we can expect them to engage in collective forms of action, like party work, campaigning, or demonstrations (Mondak 2010: 57; Mondak and Halperin 2008: 344). Individualized forms of participation, such as voting or political consumerism, are expected to be less attractive to extroverts (Cawvey et al. 2017: 11). Empirically, extraversion shows significantly positive correlations with different types of political participation, but most strongly so with social forms of political action (Ackermann 2017a; Dinesen et al. 2014; Gerber et al. 2011; Johann et al. 2020; Lindell and Strandberg 2018; Mondak 2010; Mondak et al. 2010; Mondak and Halperin 2008; Weinschenk 2013; Weinschenk 2017). Some studies, however, also report a positive relationship between extraversion and voting (Gerber et al. 2011; Weinschenk 2013). Gerber and colleagues (2011) use validated turnout data in their study, which makes their finding of a positive relationship particularly convincing. The existence of strong social norms and peer pressure are possible explanations for the link between extraversion and voting, a rather individualized form of political action.

Concerning the remaining three traits of the Big Five, the theoretical expectations are less clear. Individuals scoring high on *conscientiousness* are described as dutiful and norm abiding. At the same time, they are output-oriented and efficient. Thus, we expect that they just engage in politics if they perceive it as their duty to do so or if they assume they will benefit from it (Mondak 2010: 55). This makes the formulation of clear hypotheses a complicated endeavor. Voting, for instance, is perceived as a duty in many societies but does not reveal immediate benefits in the sense of favorable policy outcomes. In any way, feelings of duty, benefit, and efficacy should be considered as necessary preconditions for conscientious individuals to engage politically (Mondak and Halperin 2008: 343). Therefore, we do not expect strong correlations between conscientiousness and political participation. Regarding alternative and non-institutionalized forms of political action, we might even expect a negative relationship. Empirical studies suggest that, indeed, the link between conscientiousness and participation is largely conditional. First, it depends on the nature of political action. Conscientiousness is negatively related to non-institutionalized forms of participation (Ackermann and Gundelach 2020; Mondak 2010; Mondak et al. 2010; Russo and Amnå 2016b). Meanwhile, some studies find a positive link with electoral participation (Johann et al. 2020). Second, it depends on feelings of duty and efficacy (Mondak 2010).

Individuals who score high on *agreeableness* tend to avoid conflicts and strive for harmonic relationships with others. They are expected to be less active in politics, particularly in rather conflictive forms like strikes or protests (Mondak 2010: 61; Mondak and Halperin 2008: 346). Several empirical studies show that these assumptions hold: there is no systematic link between agreeableness and voting (Mondak 2010; Mondak and Halperin 2008). Evidence on political activities at the local level indicates even a negative relationship, suggesting that agreeable persons try to avoid conflicts in their immediate surroundings (Gerber et al. 2011). Consistent findings of a negative link between agreeableness and participation in protests (Brandstätter and Opp 2014; Ha et al. 2013; Weinschenk 2017) and deliberative and expressive activities (Lindell and Strandberg 2018; Russo and Amnå 2016b) point in the same direction.

Finally, there are no clear expectations for *neuroticism*. Emotions like anger might draw less emotionally stable individuals into political action, but at the same time, fear and depression might also turn them away (Mondak 2010: 63). In particular, group-based forms of political action might require a certain level of emotional stability (Mondak and Halperin 2008: 345). Yet, the empirical findings on neuroticism and political action are rather inconsistent. Studies indicate that individuals scoring highly on emotional stability (that is low on neuroticism) are more likely to vote (Gerber et al. 2011; Schoen and Steinbrecher 2013). Other studies cannot confirm this (Mondak et al. 2010; Weinschenk 2013) or even show negative links between emotional stability and non-electoral forms of participation (Ha et al. 2013; Mondak 2010; Mondak et al. 2010).

In conclusion, the empirical studies on personality and participation identify openness to experience and extraversion as the most important correlates of political action. For the remaining three traits of the FFM—conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism—the patterns differ across studies. One reason is that the link between these traits and political action is dependent on the form of political action. Another potential explanation for varying patterns is the role of contextual factors that might lead to diverging results across single-country studies.

The Concept of Motives

While the literature on personality and political participation centers around the concept of the Big Five personality traits, the conceptualization of motives in civic engagement research is less clear. No standard model of motives exists and the relation to psychological research is less vivid. Most of the work is still very much influenced by the aspects that Verba and colleagues (1995) have studied as psychological engagement in the CVM: political interest, political efficacy, political knowledge[1] and partisanship. Besides, specific motives are studied depending on the form of participation. For instance, feeling a duty to vote is a well-researched motive of *electoral participation* (e.g., Blais et al. 2019; Blais and Daoust 2020; Blais and Galais 2016; Blais and Rubenson 2013; Galais and Blais 2016). With regard to *partisan activities*, incentive-based models dominate the field (Bruter and Harrison 2009; Clark and Wilson 1961; Costantini and King 1984; Seyd and Whiteley 1992; Whiteley et al. 1994; Whiteley and Seyd 1998). The general incentives model, for instance, distinguishes between selective and collective incentives. While the former are individual, such as personal benefits or ideological incentives, the latter refer to the efficacy of the group to reach a policy goal (Seyd and Whiteley 1992; Whiteley et al. 1994; Whiteley and Seyd 1998). The assumption that incentives or instrumental considerations motivate political action is also prominent in the *social movements* literature (Klandermans 1984, 2013, 2015; Klandermans and Oegema 1987). Klandermans (2015) describes three motives that are key for participation in social movements: instrumentality, identity, and ideology. Thus, the striving for social and political change (instrumentality), group membership (identity), or moral and political convictions (ideology) might motivate participation in social movements. Instrumentality can also be a driver for rather individualized *cause-oriented forms of participation*, like political consumerism. For instance, recent research on veganism as a subdomain of political consumerism shows that caring about animal welfare and the environment are the most relevant motives for this kind of participation (Kalte 2021).

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[1] The original label in the CVM is political information (Verba et al. 1995). This might be misleading since it could also refer to media use and the search for political information. Thus, political knowledge is used.

Motives and Political Participation

Since there is no unified conceptualization of motives of political participation, the following overview of the empirical findings relies very much on what Verba and colleagues (1995) have studied as psychological engagement. Theoretically, they assume that the four aspects under study—political interest, political efficacy, political knowledge, and partisanship—increase the desire to participate in politics, and equip individuals with the necessary knowledge and self-confidence to do so (Verba et al. 1995: 343 ff.).

The finding that *political interest* is a key motive of political participation seems to be one of the most certain findings of civic engagement research. Accordingly, since the seminal writings on the CVM (Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995), which underscore the importance of political interest, only a few studies have put the spotlight on political interest as an explanatory variable (Blais and St-Vincent 2011). Mostly, it is used as a control variable or as one explanation among many. Various meta-analyses in participation research also emphasize the positive link between political interest and different forms of participation (Copeland and Boulianne 2020; Smets and van Ham 2013). As research on digital media use and civic engagement shows, political interest is not only directly linked to political action, but it also moderates the effect of other explanations (Bimber et al. 2014). Yet, not only the level of political interest matters for participation but also the level of *political knowledge*. Studies show that those who are informed and knowledgeable about public affairs and politics are more likely to actively engage in politics (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Galston 2001). Concerning *political efficacy*, early work by Finkel (1985, 1987) emphasizes that the relationship between efficacy and political participation is reciprocal. Particularly, active engagement in politics seems to strengthen external efficacy, which captures the feeling of being heard by politicians. Thus, political efficacy is not only a motive for political participation but also a consequence of becoming active. This finding is also supported by more recent research focusing on adolescents (Quintelier and Van Deth 2014). Finally, existing research supports the assumption that *partisanship* functions as a motive for political participation (Bankert 2021; Fowler and Kam 2007). It can be considered an instrumental motive for political action because party affiliates try to influence public affairs according to their party's goals. In the polarized context of the US, it might even be negative affect towards the opposing party rather than support for the own party that strengthens participation (Iyengar and Krupenkin 2018).

In sum, the positive link between the aspects of psychological engagement, which Verba and colleagues (1995) discuss as the motivational basis of political participation, and different forms of political action is well documented in the empirical literature. Yet, the question of causality should be kept in mind when reviewing this literature. Several studies point to reciprocal relationships (Finkel 1985, 1987; Quintelier and Van Deth 2014). Furthermore, a recent study by Weinschnek and colleagues (2021) indicates that political interest, efficacy, and knowledge on the one hand and political participation on the other hand might share the same biological roots. Thus, it would be common underlying biological factors that bring about the positive relationship instead of the motives themselves.

The Role of Context and Situation

Hitherto, I have considered the dispositional and motivational antecedents of political participation in isolation. However, we know from psychological theory and research that psychological factors interact with situational and contextual circumstances in shaping individual behavior (McGraw 2006). Mondak and colleagues (2010: 87) have identified this perspective of a person–context interaction as enormously fruitful for the study of personality and politics. Many others have followed the call for moving beyond simple direct relationships between personality and participation. The studies can be divided into two larger categories. First, several studies focus on the interaction between personality traits and individual demographic factors, like age or gender, or other individual factors, like political interest (Furnham and Cheng 2019; Mattila et al. 2011; Quintelier 2014; Wang 2014). The second segment of studies focuses on the interaction of personality and situational aspects, such as experimental treatments during campaigns, perceived campaign importance, social media use, political discussions, or network size (Dawkins 2017; Gerber et al. 2013; Kim et al. 2013; Mondak et al. 2010; Russo and Amnå 2016a; Weinschenk and Panagopoulos 2014), or structural contexts, like political institutions (Ackermann 2017a).

Against this backdrop, I argue that it is valuable to consider the conditionality of the link between psychological factors and civic engagement theoretically and empirically. The key question is under which circumstances individual psychological factors, like personality traits or motives, materialize in civic engagement. I argue that two mechanisms should be considered: activation and compensation. First, situational or contextual factors might *activate* traits and motives that are favorable for political participation. Thereby, they strengthen the link between these psychological factors and political activism. To give an example, strong participatory institutions that offer many possibilities for activism might turn the political arena into a lively context that attracts extroverts even more strongly. Thus, participatory institutions might further activate this trait and amplify the like between extraversion and participation. Second, situational or contextual factors that are themselves favorable for political participation might *compensate* for a lack of motivation. Thereby, they narrow the participation gap between highly motivated and unmotivated citizens. To stick to the example of participatory institutions, such a context favorable to political activism might normalize political participation and render strong motives, like political interest or efficacy, less important as antecedents for political participation.

In the following, I will conduct two exploratory empirical analyses to exemplify this argument.[2] The first analysis examines whether the link between personality traits and political participation varies across three different countries. Due to a lack of large-scale comparative data on personality traits in public opinion surveys, I have to rely on this simple comparative approach. I use data from the Canadian (Stephenson et al. 2020), German (GLES 2019), and US (ANES 2017) election studies 2016–2019 that have all included a measure of personality. Indices for the Big Five personality traits serve as main independent variables; as the dependent variable, I distinguish between voting, institutionalized participation, and

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[2] Supplementary material on the empirical analyses, including a description of data, measures, and methodology, and full regression results, can be found here: https://osf.io/tdkvr/.

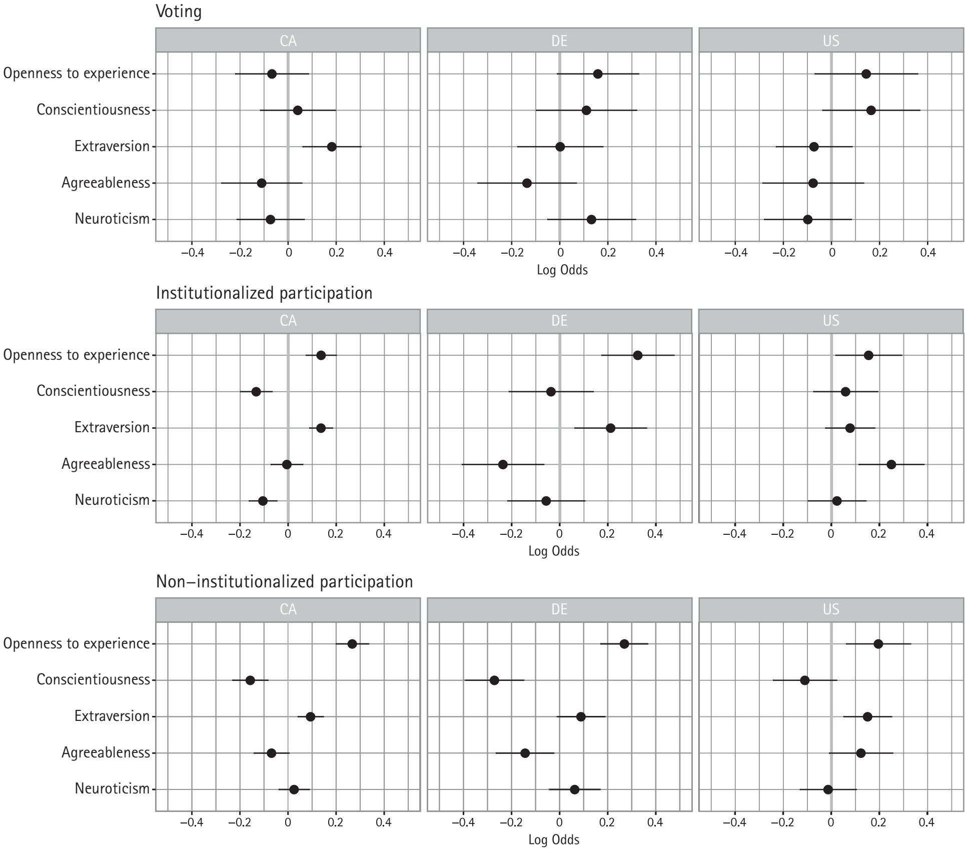

FIGURE 36.1 Big Five Personality Traits and Political Participation

Note: The plot is based on logistic regression models using data from the Canadian (Stephenson et al. 2020), German (GLES 2019) and US (ANES 2017) election studies. It shows the regression coefficients (dots) and the 95% confidence intervals (horizontal lines). Age, gender, and education are control variables in the models.

non-institutionalized participation.[3] Figure 36.1 reveals interesting insights regarding the consistency and variability of personality effects across countries. On the one hand, some relationships are stable over the three contexts. Openness to experience is, for instance, positively related to institutionalized and non-institutionalized participation but not to voting in each country. Conscientiousness is negatively related to non-institutionalized participation in Canada and Germany and slightly misses significance in the US. On the other hand, some relationships are inconsistent across the contexts. Most strikingly, agreeableness is negatively related to institutionalized participation in Germany and positively in the US. I can only speculate about the reasons for varying relationships. They might be rooted in institutional or societal differences that activate agreeable persons for participation in the US and deactivate them in Germany. Yet, due to a lack of comparative data sets including the Big Five personality traits, I cannot put these contextual explanations to a severe empirical test.

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[3] Institutionalized participation includes contacting, working in a party or political organization, and campaign activities (dichotomized—participated in at least one of the activities in the last 12 months); non-institutionalized participation includes signing a petition, protest, boycott, and political online activities (dichotomized—participated in at least one of the activities in the last 12 months). Age (in years), gender (dichotomous), and education (in years) are included as additional control variables in the model.

A strict empirical test of the interaction hypothesis is, however, possible when studying the link between motives and political participation. In the following, I will use data from the European Social Survey (ESS) 2018, which is combined with contextual variables from the Democracy Barometer data set (Engler et al. 2020).[4] I study the interaction of political interest and the participatory nature of the political environment to test the compensation argument. More precisely, I test whether a participatory political environment can compensate for a lack of political interest.[5] The contextual variable "participatory political environment" captures the degree of equality and effectiveness of participatory rules and opportunities in a country (Bühlmann et al. 2011). Overall, the data set comprises 39,669 individuals and 23 countries. Figure 36.2 illustrates the results and lends partial support to the compensation thesis. A highly participatory environment is able to close the gap in voting propensities between politically interested and non-interested citizens. For institutionalized and non-institutionalized participation, a participatory environment increases participation for both interested and non-interested citizens. Thus, a participatory environment cannot close the gap in these cases.

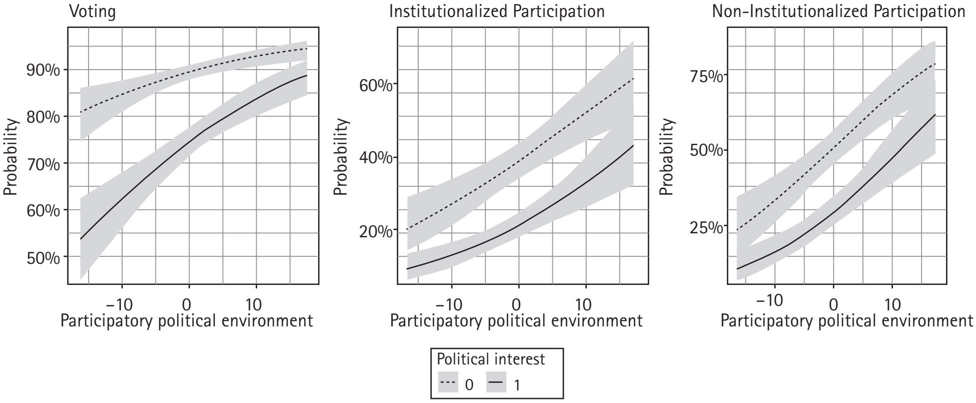

FIGURE 36.2 Political Interest, Participatory Political Environment, and Political Participation

Note: The plot is based on multilevel logistic regression models using data from ESS round 8 and from the Democracy Barometer 2014. It shows the predicted probabilities for political participation depending on the level of political interest (0 = low, 1 = high) and the nature of the political environment (higher values = high levels of equality and effectiveness in participation). Age, gender, and education are control variables on the individual level.

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[4] The data applied in the analysis in this publication is based on the ESS Multilevel Data. The data is provided by Democracy Barometer (Engler et al. 2020), and prepared and made available by NSD—Norwegian Centre for Research Data. Neither Democracy Barometer (Engler et al. 2020) nor NSD are responsible for the analyses/interpretation of the data presented here.

[5] Political interest is measured as a dichotomous variable. The contextual variable is taken from the Democracy Barometer and is measured in 2014 as a continuous index (Engler et al. 2020).

Overall, these simple tests of the person–context interaction argument illustrate its empirical relevance. Citizens do not decide in isolation whether to participate or not to participate in politics. Rather, their engagement decisions depend on their social surroundings and their political environment. Thus, individual dispositions and motives will affect participation conditional on contextual factors.

Conclusion

This chapter gives an overview of the study of personality and motives as antecedents of political participation. It outlines theoretical considerations and summarizes empirical findings. Although both personality traits and motives are psychological correlates of civic engagement, a major difference in the study of these relationships becomes obvious. While motives are well embedded in the standard models of civic engagement, this line of research often lacks interdisciplinary ties to psychological approaches. In contrast, the literature on personality and political participation is well connected to psychology but only weakly related to other explanations of participation in political behavior research. In conclusion, the stronger integration of psychology and political science in the analysis of political participation represents the central desideratum of this branch of research.

Concerning the study of personality and political action, the innovative potential lies in "moving beyond [. . .] direct effects", as Mondak (2010: 185) already noted a decade ago. At the same time, this promises greater integration with political science models for explaining participation. Three avenues are promising in this regard. *First*, interactions of personality and other correlates of political participation should be put in the spotlight. Developing theoretical arguments in terms of trait activation and compensation might be a fruitful pathway. This includes the interaction with contextual factors and individual characteristics, such as motives, resources, and sociodemographic factors. Existing research shows that the link between personality and political action potentially differs, for instance, by age (Mattila et al. 2011), gender (Wang 2014), and political interest (Quintelier 2014). In one of the few attempts to study personality and participation in a cross-national comparison, Weinschenk (2017) reports differential relationships across countries but does not further investigate these differences. Using a subnational comparison, Ackermann (2017a) illustrates how we can make sense of differential effects across political contexts. This study shows that the link between openness to experience and protest participation depends on the level of direct democracy in a canton. Thus, studying interactions between political institutions and personality traits seems a fruitful avenue. The simple three-country comparison (see Figure 36.1) in this chapter also supports this claim. Yet, to move research on personality and politics further in this direction, the availability of high-quality comparative data on personality in different parts of the world is a precondition. At this point, this data is not available although suitable short scales to measure the Big Five personality traits have been developed (Gosling et al. 2003; Hahn et al. 2012; Rammstedt and John 2007). *Second*, disentangling the mechanisms between personality traits and political action seems a fruitful avenue for the study of personality and politics. This could lead to a stronger integration with standard models of civic engagement research. Several examples point in this direction and illustrate the role of motives, like political interest, duty to vote, or political efficacy, as mediating factors (Gallego and Oberski 2012; Mondak et al. 2010; Russo and Amnå 2016b; Schoen and Steinbrecher 2013). Another approach to better understand the mechanisms is to disaggregate personality traits and to focus on the relevance of single facets for political action. Hitherto, this approach is less common in studies using the Big Five personality traits than in studies operating with alternative personality models (Chen et al. 2021; Fazekas and Hatemi 2020). *Third*, and related to the former aspect, alternative personality models could advance our understanding of personality and politics. This review has focused on research using the Big Five Model of personality, which is an encompassing model of personality characterized by its breadth and neutrality. Yet, recent research shows that it might be fruitful to broaden the perspective and include alternative models of personality, which are particularly relevant in the political arena. Particularly, the Dark Triad, which only captures malevolent characteristics of individuals, namely narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, has been receiving increasing attention in political behavior research recently (Chen et al. 2021; Fazekas and Hatemi 2020).

While motives are one of the classical explanations of civic engagement in the political science literature, the potential for innovation lies in a stronger link to psychological research. In psychology, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is one of the most established accounts to study the motives of individual action (Deci and Ryan 1985, 2000; Ryan and Deci 2000). It distinguishes between autonomous and controlled motivation. Autonomous motivation resembles intrinsic and internalized motivation, while controlled motivation describes externally induced extrinsic motivation. Concerning intrinsic or internalized motivation, SDT assumes that individuals carry three basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—and strive for their satisfaction (Deci and Ryan 2008). Thus, motivation for behavior is grounded in the satisfaction of these basic psychological needs. SDT as a general theory of motivation seems to be easily connectable to political science research on motives and political behavior. Yet, surprisingly few studies reflect on SDT in political behavior research (for exceptions see e.g., Lilleker and Koc-Michalska 2017; Russo and Stattin 2017; Wuttke 2020a, 2020b). Beyond the SDT, other psychological theories, like the expectancy-value model (see e.g., Levy and Akiva 2019), or approaches that explicitly bridge psychology and political science, as the model of core motivations suggested by van Zomeren (2016), might be promising avenues. Overall, stronger integration of psychological and political science approaches to motives has the potential to significantly advance this literature.

In conclusion, the discussion of existing theoretical models and empirical findings, as well as desiderata in the study of personality and motives, emphasizes the importance of broadening perspectives in participation research. Concepts and theories from neighboring disciplines, such as psychology, can enhance our understanding of citizens' decision to become active members of the political community. Particularly, a focus on the interaction of individual psychological factors, like personality traits and motives, and contextual surroundings, like institutions, will offer valuable insights for mobilization. Public discourse about how to mobilize citizens and how to foster civic engagement often revolve around institutional reforms, like the establishment of citizen assemblies or direct democratic processes. Yet, whether such reforms can actually reinforce participation depends on the way citizens react to them. Only if we understand inter-individual differences in the reactions to contextual stimuli, can we reflect on their mobilizing potential. It is therefore essential to give psychological factors a firm place in explanatory models of political participation.

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CHAPTER 37

POLITICAL VALUES AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

ANTHONY F. HEATH, LINDSAY RICHARDS, AND JULIA JUNGBLUT

POLITICAL attitudes and values play a major explanatory role in many areas of political science. Values are generally regarded as stable and enduring orientations, learned in childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood, and associated with a range of political outcomes. Socialist and laissez-faire values, for example, have been invoked as major factors underlying support for parties of the left and right, authoritarian values have been invoked to explain support for populist leaders, postmaterialist values have been linked to protest movements, while democratic values have been seen as central to understand political stability (Almond and Verba 1963; Crewe and Sanders 2020; Heath et al. 1991; Inglehart 1977; Lipset 1959).

Values are major factors, alongside identities and interests, in shaping attitudes towards more specific policy issues and controversies such as migration, taxation, climate change, abortion, or the death penalty. Values can also be formally integrated into more specific ideologies or "isms" such as Marxism, socialism, or Thatcherism, or informally into different political cultures and worldviews. Given this central theoretical role played by values, we focus in this chapter on the relationship between values and political participation. We should note, though, that many measures of political values are in practice (as we will describe later) based on families of questions on closely linked political attitudes (Feldman 1988). Thus in a seminal article Converse suggested that "a few crowning postures—like premises about survival of the fittest in the spirit of Social Darwinism—serve as a sort of glue to bind together many more specific attitudes and beliefs, and these postures are of prime centrality in the belief system as a whole" (Converse 1964: 211).

Throughout the chapter we distinguish between electoral and non-electoral forms of participation. The main form of electoral participation considered is that of turnout in national and local elections, whereas non-electoral forms cover a much wider range of actions such as signing a petition, making a political donation, boycotting, or participating in a demonstration, and can include both conventional "in person" actions as well as new digital forms of participation.[1] While finer distinctions between different types of non-electoral participation can be made, in practice we found that analysis of specific subtypes did not yield major new insights on the relationships between political participation and the five value dimensions that we consider in this chapter.

As alluded to above, a range of distinct values relevant to political behavior has been identified in the literature. While various systematic and theoretically derived lists of values have been suggested (for example by Schwartz 2006), in this chapter we take a more eclectic approach, focusing on those values which have been highlighted in the political science literature as relevant to understanding political phenomena, namely:

- Left–right (socialist vs *laissez-faire*) values.
- Libertarian–authoritarian values
- Traditional values
- Materialist and postmaterialist (survival vs self-expression) values
- Democratic values

While there are several conceptual similarities between these different values, especially between libertarian–authoritarian values, traditional values, and postmaterialist values, there are also important distinctions, and we do not expect them to simply duplicate each other when it comes to explaining different forms of political participation. Standard ways of operationalizing these values employ different questions, and the resulting indicators prove to have relatively weak inter-correlations with each other as described in this chapter.

While these five values have been implicated in a range of political phenomena, their relationship with political participation has been much less studied. On theoretical grounds, however, we expect that democratic values will be strongly linked to electoral participation, while libertarian and postmaterialist (self-expression) values will be associated with elite-challenging forms of participation, such as demonstrating or protesting (especially over quality-of-life issues). We do not anticipate that values such as those on the left–right (socialist–*laissez faire*) spectrum will have a major direct role in influencing electoral participation, except insofar as citizens who hold stronger values of these sorts may tend to be more likely to participate in pursuit of these values. Left-wing values have also been associated with protests against the established order (Grasso and Giugni 2019). In contrast, traditional values are likely to be associated with the acceptance of traditional elites and to involve lower levels of elite-challenging forms of participation.

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[1] We first conducted a factor analysis of the main forms of political action asked in the WVS countries. (We excluded some additional items which were not asked across all countries.) The items and question wordings were:

> *I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it:*
>
> Q209 signing a petition
> Q210 joining boycotts
> Q211 attending demonstrations
> Q213 donating to a group
> Q214 contacting a government official
> Q214 encouraging others to vote
>
> *When elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never? Please tell me separately for each of the following levels:*
>
> Q221 voting at local level
> Q222 voting at national level.

This yielded a two-factor solution with the first six items loading on the first factor and the latter two on the second factor. For factor 1 the Eigenvalue = 2.46; factor 2 eigenvalue = 1.39. KMO = .775. We describe the first factor as representing non-electoral participation (or political action) and the second as electoral participation (or turnout).

This chapter proceeds as follows. First, we provide a conceptual discussion of values and their relationship to attitudes and ideologies. Secondly, we describe in more detail the five value dimensions on which we focus, and examine empirically how far these different values and their salience can explain individuals' patterns of participation. Thirdly, we consider whether these relationships between values and participation hold equally true across different political contexts, such as democratic and autocratic political systems, or whether there is an interplay between values, political context, and participation.

Attitudes, Values and Ideology: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

The concept of "values" is a contested one, with many different definitions and conceptual approaches, although there are a number of common themes. For example, in an early treatment Kluckhohn defined a value as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action" (1951: 395). Rokeach offered the definition: "A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence" (1973: 5). A recent treatment, which we follow in this chapter, is that of Schwartz: "I define values as conceptions of the desirable that guide the way social actors, organization leaders, policy-makers, individual persons select action, evaluate people and events, and explain their actions and evaluations." (1999: 24)

A common theme running through these and most mainstream treatments is that values are normative rather than cognitive or instrumental—they are beliefs about what *should be* rather than beliefs about *what is* the case—they represent ideals. They are trans-situational general principles and can be contrasted with attitudes, preferences, tastes, and norms which are focused on specific policy issues such as immigration or Brexit. Values, however, are expected to play a major role in shaping attitudes towards policy issues of this sort. Individuals are also able to hold simultaneously a range of different values which may yield contradictory implications in specific situations. Hence, second-order issues will arise about the trade-offs between different values and the priorities to be attached to different values in particular contexts. As Schwartz (2006: 143) argues:

> (1) *Values are beliefs* that are linked inextricably to affect.
> (2) *Values refer to desirable goals* that motivate action.

> (3) *Values transcend specific actions and situations* (e.g., obedience and honesty are values that are relevant at work or in school, in sports, business, and politics, with family, friends, or strangers). This feature distinguishes values from narrower concepts like norms and attitudes that usually refer to specific actions, objects, or situations.
>
> (4) *Values serve as standards or criteria* that guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events.
>
> (5) *Values are ordered by importance* relative to one another to form a system of priorities. This hierarchical feature also distinguishes values from norms and attitudes.
>
> (6) *The relative importance of values guides action*. The trade-off among relevant, competing values is what guides attitudes and behaviors.

Values may be organized into specific formal ideologies such as Marxism, socialism, or neo-liberalism which combine a range of values, beliefs, and empirical claims into more or less coherent articulated programs for understanding the social world and driving forward specific political agendas. These have been particularly influential in secular Western democracies, while religious value systems articulated in the sacred texts have played a similar role historically. In practice, an individual's values are unlikely to conform fully to any formal ideology and are often a more or less idiosyncratic mix of different values.

Individuals may also vary in the salience that values have for them. Thus, while for some individuals values may be the source of principled action, for other individuals values may carry less weight and action may reflect more circumstantial factors, self-interest, or lack of interest, and social pressures. We need to set values, therefore, within a broader theoretical framework for understanding political participation. (See, for example, Dalton et al. 2010, who develop a framework distinguishing grievances, resources, values, and the political context.)

A number of major drivers of individual differences in values, and their salience, have been identified. One theme has focused on the role of socialization within the family. The classic studies emphasized the importance of early socialization within the family (Jennings and Niemi 1968). Moving outwards from the family, a second theme has focused on the roles of families' class situations and interests, finding the development of more socialist and communitarian values among working-class individuals and communities (especially among those resident in highly unionized industrial milieus) as opposed to the more laissez faire and individualistic values predominant in middle-class settings, especially in the private sector and among the petty bourgeoisie of small shopkeepers and employers (Evans and Opacic 2020; Heath et al. 1991; Parkin 1967).

Another school of research has focused not on social class but on the role of schooling and college, with higher education in particular (as a result of its more diverse and questioning culture) associated with more liberal and democratic values in contrast to the more authoritarian values found among individuals with lower exposure to education (Surridge 2016; Weakliem 2002).

A third approach has moved wider still to consider the role of historical formative influences, especially during early adulthood, and the way in which different political generations with different values can emerge in particular political contexts such as wartime or the liberation and affluence of the 1960s (Mannheim 1950 [1928]). According to Mannheim, people are significantly influenced by the sociohistorical environment of their youth. These shared experiences can create distinctive generations (in the sense of birth cohorts who shared specific formative experiences) that mark them out from preceding or succeeding generations. Generational theories of this kind play a major role in Inglehart's theory of the "silent revolution" and the emergence of post-materialist values among young people coming of age in the 1960s (Inglehart 1971, 1977). More recent generations, growing up in the shadow of the financial crash and COVID, might be expected perhaps to return towards survival values (Austin 2016; Grasso et al. 2017).

Fourthly, values can be shaped by the wider culture of the society, developed historically, and may as a result be organized into distinctive cultures that have continued to resonate across the centuries, as in Weber's classic discussion of the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Various scholars (such as Hofstede 2001; Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Schwartz 2006) have identified and classified the different packages of values that predominate in different areas of the world (see Chapter 30 by Franziska Deutsch in this volume).

However, it is also important to recognize that, within each country, generation, sub-culture, or indeed family there will be considerable variation between individuals, both in the values to which they subscribe and in the salience of these values to them. Broadly speaking, in a statistical sense, we expect to find least individual variation within a family, greater variation within communities, more still within generations, and most of all within countries or civilizations. (Compare, for example, the high levels of similarity in partisanship within families shown by Lampard 1997, the lower level of similarity within ethnic communities shown by Heath et al, 2013, and the large individual differences within countries shown in multi-level models.)

LEFT–RIGHT (SOCIALIST/LAISSEZ-FAIRE) VALUES

Left–right values have been particularly prominent in European democracies ever since the French Revolution (for overviews see Fuchs and Klingemann 2014; Klingemann 1979). As is well known, the terms "left" and "right" date from the time of the French Revolution and reflected the seating of supporters of the King (on the right) and of the revolution (to the left). The meanings of the terms have subsequently evolved, reflecting changing political contexts, although with the right typically associated with defense of the status quo and the associated privileges and the left with challenges to the status quo, and in particular with demands for redistribution and equality. Various strands of Marxist and socialist ideology have been associated with the left, and the common theme has been an emphasis on greater equality and a fairer distribution of economic rewards in society ("from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs / *Jeder nach seinen Fähigkeiten, jedem nach seinen Bedürfnissen*") and state intervention in order to secure the necessary redistribution. In contemporary political contexts right-wing values, in contrast, can be characterized as prioritizing individual action and self-reliance and a preference for the protection of property rights, the free play of market forces, and individual freedom of choice. Left-wing values have been most strongly held in working-class and unionized communities, and right-wing values among more privileged groups, especially those working in the private sector or self-employed (although by no means all of the latter are privileged in terms of income or wealth).

Various approaches have been used for measuring left–right values. One widely used method simply asks respondents to place themselves on a scale (typically with ten points) running from "Left" to "Right" (Kroh 2007). These self-placement scales leave it up to the respondent to decide what the terms mean. An alternative approach asks respondents to say whether they agree or disagree with a battery of questions asking about their attitudes towards different aspects of the underlying theoretical concept, for example towards redistribution of income and wealth, government intervention in the labor market, and private ownership of major industries (see for example Heath et al. 1994). In the World Values Survey (WVS) data which we use in this chapter we use four items in which respondents were asked to give their views on whether: [2]

> "Incomes should be made more equal" versus "There should be greater incentives for individual effort"
> "Private ownership of business and industry should be increased" versus "Government ownership of business and industry should be increased"
> "Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for" versus "People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves"

While such measures of left–right values have been strongly associated with support for political parties in Europe, we have no special theoretical reason to expect the *content* of these values to affect levels of electoral participation. While electoral turnout has typically been higher among more highly educated groups and more advantaged social classes, the cohesive working-class communities that foster socialist values can also serve to mobilize their supporters to turn out to vote. Our expectation, however, is that electoral participation will be higher among those for whom either left or right values are more salient, that is, among those who care more strongly about either economic equality or about economic freedom of choice.

In the case of non-electoral forms of participation, however, there is evidence that people on the left are more likely to engage in protest since their values are more likely to lead them to challenge the status quo and to adopt protest activities as part of their political repertoire (Dalton et al. 2010; Grasso and Giugni 2019). These expectations are broadly confirmed by our analysis of recent (2017–2020) World Values Survey data.

Figure 37.1 shows the relationship between left–right values and our two measures of political participation: turnout at national or local elections, and participation in various forms of non-electoral political action such as petitions, boycotts, and demonstrations. These two different forms of participation differ markedly in their relationship with left–right values. (In Figure 37.1 we divide the public into five quintiles ranging from the 20 percent who are most left wing to the 20 percent who are most right wing.)

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[2] The detailed question wording of the items for measuring left–right values was:

Now I'd like you to tell me your views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the left; 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the right; and if your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between:

Q106 Incomes should be made more equal—There should be greater incentives for individual effort

Q107 Private ownership of business and industry should be increased—Government ownership of business and industry should be increased (scores reversed in the overall measure)

Q108 Government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for—People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves

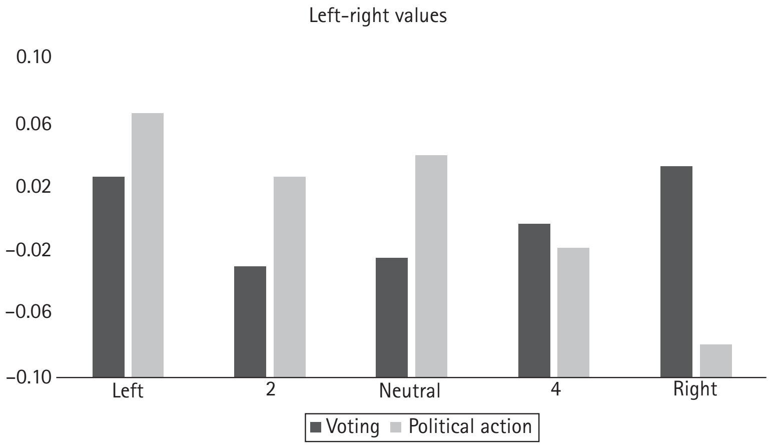

FIGURE 37.1 Left–Right Values and Political Participation

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of left-right values is based on the factor scores of the four items described in footnote 3, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'left') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'right').

In the case of electoral participation, we see a U-shaped curve with higher levels of participation among those in the most left- and right-wing quintiles respectively, with lower levels of turnout on the part of those with more neutral positions. This is in line with the theory that the salience of these particular values to individuals will be a significant driver of participation (although the effect is not especially strong).

However, in the case of non-electoral participation, we find a rather different relationship, with the highest level of participation among left-wingers, quite a high level among those holding neutral positions, and the lowest level among those holding right-wing values. This pattern may partly reflect other political values which left- and right-wingers typically hold. Thus, right-wingers might be expected to hold, on average, rather more traditional values than left-wingers do. In fact, however, the correlation between right-wing and traditional values, though positive, is relatively weak.[3] An alternative explanation in terms of the political context is more likely. Thus, the majority of societies covered by the World Values Survey tend to be based on relatively free-market, capitalist societies. The few societies based on thorough-going socialist principles, such as Cuba or, for a time, Venezuela, are not included in the WVS sample of countries. Left-wingers will therefore tend to be at odds with prevailing institutional arrangements and more inclined to protest against these arrangements.

More detailed analysis by Grasso and Giugni (2019) shows that a key mechanism involved is that left-wingers

> are more likely to join organizations that facilitate the spread of information from other similar organisations and agencies with the result of mobilising them to both extra-institutional and institutional political action ... Particularly in the context of the economic crisis, factors such as austerity and wide-ranging budget cuts disproportionately affecting

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[3] In a multivariate analysis, controlling for basic demographics and the other value dimensions, the effect of left-right values on political action is reduced but the direction of the effect remains the same.

> the poorest could impel them to voice their disagreement with principles they do not share. (Grasso and Giugni 2019: 480)

LIBERTARIAN–AUTHORITARIAN VALUES

Political scientists have frequently contrasted the left–right value dimension with a cross-cutting dimension of libertarian–authoritarian values which focuses on people's personal freedom to pursue their preferred way of life (Tilley 2005). In contrast to the economic focus of the left–right dimension, the focus of the libertarian–authoritarian dimension has been on personal freedom and the values of tolerance of diversity, freedom of speech, and freedom of association. The core ideas of this dimension link to John Stuart Mill's classic essay *On Liberty* (1859) in which Mill analyzed the tensions between personal freedom on the one hand and the tyranny of the state on the other hand (including the tyranny of the majority) which can seek to constrain and limit individual freedoms such as freedom of thought, freedom of character, and freedom of action. In essence, Mill argued that, in their private lives, individuals should be free to make their own choices provided that these did not have harmful consequences for others. He wrote:

> "The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle [. . .] That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection" (*On Liberty*, XVIII: 223).

Accordingly, measures of the libertarian–authoritarian value dimension have focused on items tapping freedom of thought and conscience, freedom of association, and freedom to pursue one's own course of life. Typically, the items that have been used cover attitudes towards censorship, towards people who lead unconventional lives, and towards the right to organize protests against the government. Unfortunately, the World Values Survey does not cover the full range of topics but does have some items which tap people's freedom to choose their own course of life. We therefore use the following four items which asked respondents whether the following can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between[4]:

Homosexuality
Abortion
Sex before marriage
The death penalty

Previous research has shown that libertarian attitudes are much more likely to be expressed among people with higher levels of education, and the factor derived from these four items also showed a strong association with educational level. Previous research has also found

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[4] The detailed question wording of the items for measuring libertarian-authoritarian values was:

Please tell me for each of the following actions whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using this card: (1 never justifiable—10 Always justifiable):

Q182 Homosexuality
Q184 Abortion
Q182 Sex before marriage
Q182 Death penalty

that libertarian–authoritarian values tend empirically to cross-cut left–right values, the two dimensions being very weakly correlated. Again, this is replicated in the case of our measure which has a correlation of 0.049 with our measure of left–right values. We can thus regard the measure as a reasonable proxy.

Like the left–right dimension, the libertarian–authoritarian dimension has been shown to be linked to political partisanship with authoritarians being attracted to far right "authoritarian populist parties" which tend to be intolerant of dissent and opposed to sections of society who do not subscribe to the accepted norms and ways of life of the majority. Authoritarian values were also, in the UK, the single best predictor of support for Brexit (Crewe and Sanders 2020).

As with left–right values, we expect to find a U-shaped relationship with electoral participation, those who hold stronger and more extreme views being more likely to turn out and vote. Previous research has also found a similar but somewhat stronger association between liberal values and non-electoral participation than in the case of left–right values (Grasso and Giugni 2019), authoritarians tending to reject political dissent and favor conformity with the established order.

The WVS data supports these expectations. Figure 37.2 shows a similar pattern to Figure 37.1, with a weak U-shaped relationship between libertarian–authoritarian values and electoral participation, and a more or less linear relationship with non-electoral participation. The latter relationship, however, is much stronger than was the equivalent relationship in Figure 37.1. Thus, the most authoritarian quintile of individuals in the WVS data have a very low propensity to engage in non-electoral political participation (scoring -0.37 on the scale) compared with a more middling propensity of the most right-wing quintile (scoring -0.08). This may well reflect the relative absence of campaigns over authoritarian issues such as censorship or the death penalty.

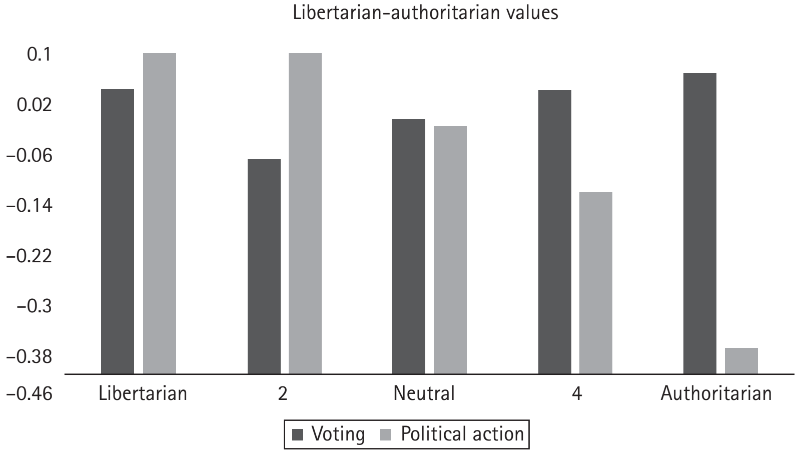

FIGURE 37.2 Libertarian–Authoritarian Values and Political Participation

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of libertarian-authoritarian values is based on the factor scores of the four items described in footnote 5, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'libertarian') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'authoritarian').

TRADITIONAL VALUES

The concept of traditional values (as opposed to modern secular values) has some similarities with that of authoritarian values. For example, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) contrast traditional values, which emphasize the importance of religion, deference to authority, traditional family values, and the rejection of divorce, abortion, and suicide, with secular–rational values which place less emphasis on religion, traditional family values, and authority, and are more accepting of divorce, abortion, and suicide. This conception of traditional versus secular–rational values comes very close (particularly in terms of operationalization) to the libertarian–authoritarian dimension discussed earlier. Schwartz, however, has offered an alternative interpretation of traditional values—one which is not so tightly tied to Abrahamic religious traditions. In this alternative interpretation, Schwartz sees traditional cultures as ones where the individual is embedded within a social community in which social harmony and solidarity is given greater weight than individual autonomy and liberty. As Schwartz explains:

> "In cultures with an emphasis on embeddedness, people are viewed as entities embedded in the collectivity. Meaning in life comes largely through social relationships, through identifying with the group, participating in its shared way of life, and striving toward its shared goals. Embedded cultures emphasize maintaining the status quo and restraining actions that might disrupt in-group solidarity or the traditional order. Important values in such cultures are social order, respect for tradition, security, obedience, and wisdom". (Schwartz 2006:140).

Note that Schwartz's account does not specify the specific content of the traditional values: traditional values could celebrate matriarchy not just patriarchy, for example. They could be religious or relatively secular, as in the case of Confucian values with their strong emphases on filial piety, one's duties towards elders and authorities, and on social harmony (on Confucian values, see O'Dwyer 2003).

To measure this conception of traditional values we use a set of questions quite distinct from those used to measure the libertarian–authoritarian value dimension. We created a scale from four items, namely whether respondents agree with the statements that[5]

> "One of my main goals in life has been to make my parents proud"
> "Adult children have the duty to provide long-term care for their parents"
> Whether "Greater respect for authority" would be a good or a bad thing
> And whether it is an essential feature of democracy that "People obey their rulers"

---

[5] The detailed question wording of the items for measuring traditional values items was:

For each of the following statements I read out, can you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?

Q27 One of my main goals in life has been to make my parents proud

How would you feel about the following statements? Do you agree or disagree with them? (Strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, strongly disagree)

Q38 Adult children have the duty to provide long-term care for their parents

I'm going to read out a list of various changes in our way of life that might take place in the near future. Please tell me for each one, if it were to happen, whether you think it would be a good thing, a bad thing, or don't you mind?

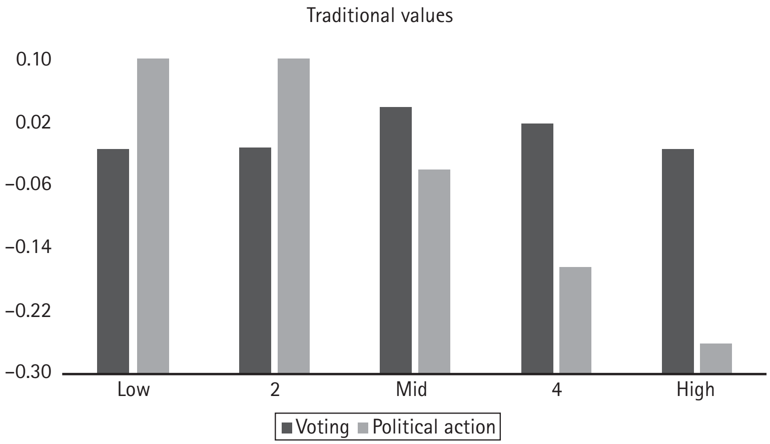

FIGURE 37.3 Traditional Values and Political Participation

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of traditional values is based on the factor scores of the four items described in footnote 6, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'low') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'high').

Our measure of traditional values is therefore based on items which capture respect for authorities and duty towards parents, but we should note that it does correlate moderately highly (0.389) with our measure of authoritarian values, despite the latter being based on quite different items. While the conceptual foundations of authoritarian and of traditional values are distinct, in practice they are closely linked.

Just as with authoritarian values, therefore, we would expect traditional values to discourage dissenting forms of political participation such as protest, whereas prescribed and socially acceptable forms of participation, for example election turnout (if elections are institutionalized in the polity) might be encouraged. In other words, we would expect traditional values to skew participation towards conventional or elite-directed rather than to unconventional or elite-challenging forms.

Empirically, Figure 37.3 shows that traditional values have no clear relationship with electoral participation but a strong negative association with non-electoral participation, the latter being of comparable strength to the association with authoritarian values.[6] These results therefore largely duplicate the findings for libertarian–authoritarian values.

Q45 Greater respect for authority

Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means "not at all an essential feature of democracy" and 10 means it definitely is "an essential characteristic of democracy":

Q248: People obey their rulers

[6] In a multivariate analysis we find that, once we control for liberal-authoritarian values, the relationship between traditional values and political action becomes non-significant. However, we should be cautious in drawing any causal inferences from this finding, which may be driven by the political salience of the items included in the two value dimensions.

Materialist–Postmaterialist (Survival versus Self-Expression) Values

The concept of postmaterialist values is a much more recent one than those of left–right or libertarian–authoritarian values. It was developed by Inglehart specifically to help understand the changing values that he observed in Western societies from the 1960s onwards in the course of a "silent revolution," as younger members of affluent Western democracies increasingly prioritized the values of personal autonomy and self-expression over the previously dominant values placed on fulfilling material wants. Inglehart argued (on the basis of Maslow's theory of a hierarchy of needs) that rising economic affluence had liberated younger members of affluent democracies from concerns over satisfying material wants (survival values) that had dominated mass publics in earlier epochs. He further postulated a generational theory that young people coming of age in the new epoch were socialized into a rising priority on personal freedom and self-expression, with activist political orientations (Inglehart 1971, 1977).

To measure the relative importance of survival and self-expression values, Inglehart offered respondents three sets of goals, in each of which they were asked to rank the importance of, for example, "A high level of economic growth" versus "seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities"; "Maintaining order in the nation" versus "protecting freedom of speech"; "the fight against crime" versus "progress toward a society in which ideas count more than money."[7]

While the self-expression elements of this measure clearly have parallels with Mill's political theory of liberty, the materialism–postmaterialism dimension cannot neatly be reduced to the libertarian–authoritarian dimension, and empirically it has a modest correlation of around 0.16 with both authoritarian and with traditional values. In effect, Inglehart combines the economic focus of the left–right dimension with the personal freedom focus of the libertarian–authoritarian dimension. In later work, Inglehart and Welzel (2005) develop

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[7] The postmaterialism measure is pre-defined in the WVS dataset, based on the following items:

People sometimes talk about what the aims of this country should be for the next ten years. On this card are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority.

Q152, 153: *Would you please say which of these you, yourself, consider the most important (and which would be the next most important):* A high level of economic growth, making sure this country has strong defense forces, seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities, trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful

Q154, 155: *Which of the things on this card would you say is most important (and which would be the next most important)?* Maintaining order in the nation, giving people more say in important government decisions, fighting rising prices, protecting freedom of speech.

Q156, 157: *Which of the things on this card would you say is most important (and which would be the next most important*)? A stable economy, Progress toward a less impersonal and more human society, Progress toward a society in which ideas count more than money, The fight against crime.

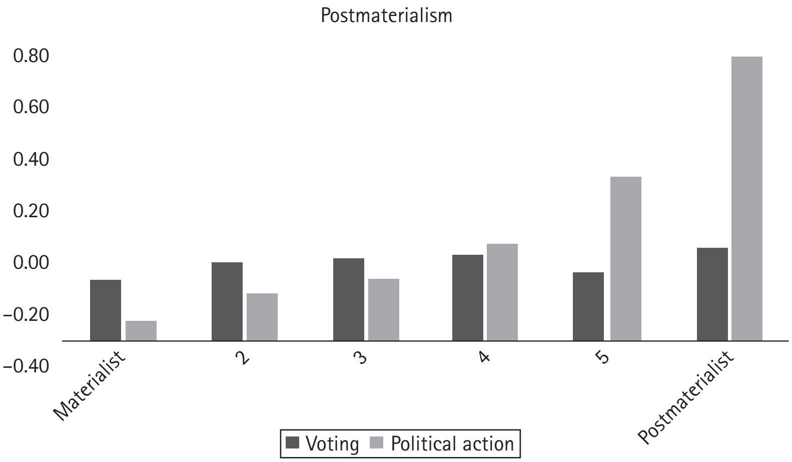

FIGURE 37.4 Materialist/Postmaterialist Values and Political Participation

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of materialist-postmaterialist values differs from that of the other values, however. It is not based on quintiles of factor scores but is Inglehart's own six-category index derived from the six items described in footnote 8.

a two-dimensional model of values contrasting postmaterialism (survival vs self-expression values) with a second dimension of "traditional vs secular-rational" values (see earlier).

At any rate, the clear implication for political participation is that people who prioritize postmaterialist values will be relatively more inclined toward elite-challenging forms of participation than towards elite-directed ones such as turnout, at least in polities where the dominant parties focus on material concerns. Strictly speaking, we would expect postmaterialists to be most inclined to participate in environmental and other quality-of-life movements. Previous research has indeed repeatedly shown strong effects of postmaterialism on protest activity (Opp 1990; Norris 2002; Dalton et al. 2010). Welzel and Deutsch (2012) have also shown that, in addition to strong effects of an individual's postmaterialist values on protest activity, the prevalence of such "emancipative" values in the society acts to amplify the likelihood of protest activity.

Figure 37.4 confirms the previous research showing that postmaterialism has a powerful relationship with non-electoral participation, a stronger relationship than those with traditional or with libertarian–authoritarian values.[8] This strong relationship may well reflect the fact that it combines elements of both left-wing and libertarian values. Postmaterialism also has a weak but positive association with electoral forms of participation, although this becomes non-significant once we control for other values such as democratic values, to which we turn next.

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[8] However, we should note that in Figure 37.4 we use Inglehart's own six-category index of postmaterialist values, rather than the 5 quintiles that we have used for measuring other values. The greater discriminatory power of the postmaterialism index may thus be an artifact of the number and size of the categories.

DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Democratic values belong to a rather different intellectual tradition in political science from the four which we have considered so far. Unlike left–right and libertarian–authoritarian values they have not been used to explain attitudes towards particular issues or support for parties that espouse those issues. Instead, they have been invoked to account for the legitimacy and stability of democracy. Much of the empirical literature on democratic values has focused on the legitimacy of the government and on the illegitimacy of government actions which infract democratic principles, the key idea being that congruence between the (democratic) values of the people and (democratic) political institutions is a major factor underlying political stability (Almond and Verba 1963; Eckstein 1969; Sheafer and Shenhav 2013). There has been less discussion of the relationship between democratic values and different forms of political participation, although one might anticipate that democratic values would increase electoral participation as well as non-electoral participation.

Thomassen (2007) has identified two contrasting elements within democratic values (as developed in Western democracies)—popular sovereignty over the rulers and citizens' freedom from oppression by the state:

> Democracy can be considered as a historical compromise between two different principles. The first one is the principle of *popular sovereignty*: the sovereign power is exercised by or in the name of the people. The second and at least as important principle is that the liberty of individual citizens must be protected against the power of the state, whether or not this is legitimized by the (majority of the) people. (Thomassen 2007: 423)

The second principle, of course, echoes John Stuart Mill's libertarian concerns about freedom from the tyranny of the majority, whereas the former principle is rooted in challenges against previous absolutist forms of government (as for example in early forms of left and right). Thomassen (2007) points out, however, that there is a tension between these values—most people support these general principles in the abstract, but are much less willing to extend rights such as freedom of speech to groups that they dislike or oppose.

To measure this conception of democratic values we use a set of five questions. The first two asked respondents to say how good a way of governing a country is

> "Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections"
> "Having a democratic political system"
> Whether it is an essential feature of democracy that "Religious authorities ultimately interpret laws"
> Whether it is an essential feature of democracy that there are "civil rights [to] protect people from state oppression"
> "How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically?"

The first and third of these items are, naturally, treated as indicating non-democratic values.[9]

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[9] The detailed wording of the items for measuring democratic values were:

I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country?:

This measure of democratic values attempts to incorporate both the principle of popular sovereignty and the principle of protection of the individual's liberty. While the inclusion of the item on civil rights overlaps with Mill's conception of liberty, the measures prove to have only a modest correlation with libertarian values (0.136) and are almost uncorrelated with left–right, postmaterialist, or traditional values.

One natural hypothesis is that democratic values will be associated with a range of peaceful and legitimate forms of participation, especially electoral participation, given the central position of popular sovereignty, and the related norm of duty to vote, in democratic theory. We can also expect citizens and societies which espouse democratic values to be active politically outside elections, in the various forms of legitimate political participation including protest, which we might expect to be inhibited in non-democratic societies where the values of freedom of speech and association are less entrenched.

Figure 37.5 shows that democratic values have strong and positive associations, both with electoral and with non-electoral participation. Indeed, our measure of democratic values

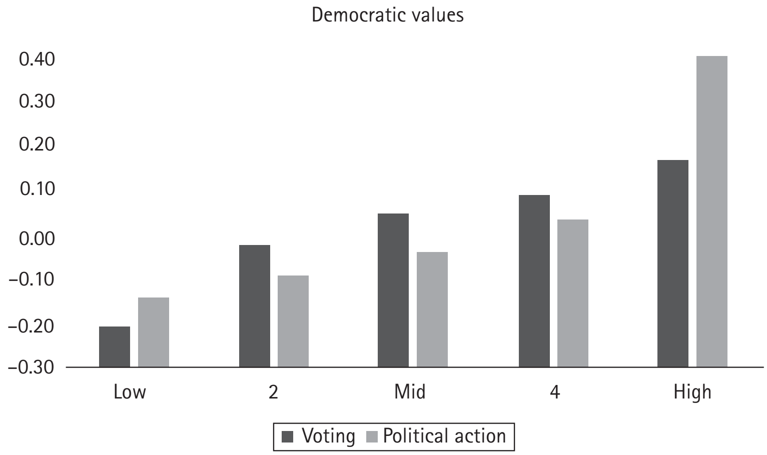

FIGURE 37.5 Democratic Values and Political Participation

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of democratic values is based on the factor scores of the five items described in footnote 10, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'low') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'high').

Q235 Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections
Q238 Having a democratic political system

Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means "not at all an essential feature of democracy" and 10 means it definitely is "an essential characteristic of democracy":

Q242 Religious authorities ultimately interpret laws
Q246 Civil rights protect people from state oppression
Q250 How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? *On this scale where 1 means it is "not at all important" and 10 means "absolutely important" what position would you choose?*

has a stronger relationship with electoral participation than do any of the other values which we have considered. The measure also has a strong relationship with non-electoral forms of political action (comparable with the relationship between libertarian values and political action). Democratic values are thus the only one of our five to be predictive of both forms of political participation. Moreover, these patterns remain strong and significant in a multivariate analysis after controlling for other value dimensions such as postmaterialism.

Overall, then, the two big players are postmaterial (self-expression) values and democratic values. To be sure, these values will not be the only drivers of participation: a host of other practical and instrumental factors will also be important, and it is quite likely too that the institutional context will also affect the relative importance of the different value orientations. We turn to this next.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE RELATIONSHIPS

There has been a growing literature exploring the ways in which individuals' characteristics, such as their political values, might operate differently within different political contexts. For example, Dalton and his colleagues have shown that "[e]conomic development and open democratic institutions facilitate the translation of individual resources into political action" (2009: 72). They find that the impacts of education on postmaterialism and on left–right values are significantly stronger in developed democratic countries, where there are institutionalized opportunities for voicing opposition and the personal risks from protest are less. (See also Welzel and Deutsch 2012; Pippa Norris, Chapter 49, in this volume.) In short, the relationships between political values and participation shown in Figures 37.1 to 37.5 are unlikely to hold equally true across all types of political context. In particular, we expect the relationships with non-electoral participation to be stronger in democracies.

One rather basic contrast is that between democratic societies and more autocratic ones with limited institutionalized opportunities for participation, whether electoral or non-electoral. We might therefore expect rather different associations between values and participation in the two types of polity. In Figures 37.6 to 37.10 we therefore show the relationships between the five value dimensions and forms of participation in democracies and autocracies.[10]

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[10] We categorize countries as either democracies, or non-democracies on the basis of Polity V scores. The Polity project (see https://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html) undertakes systematic coding of the characteristics of nation-states around the world. They use information from government and political institutions, on political openness and competitiveness, to generate scores on a 21-point scale, ranging from the least democratic (e.g., hereditary monarchy) to the most democratic (for consolidated democracies). We categorize countries with scores above 6 as democracies. As well as splitting the sample for our contextual analysis, we also use the full 21-point variable as a control variable in multivariate analysis for robustness checks. Polity scores were missing for Hong Kong, which we categorized as non-democratic, and for Andorra and Puerto Rico, which we categorized as democracies.

Democracies: Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Taiwan, Colombia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Puerto Rico, Romania, Serbia, Tunisia, United States.

Non-democracies: Bangladesh, Myanmar, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Hong Kong, Iran, Jordan, Russia, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine.

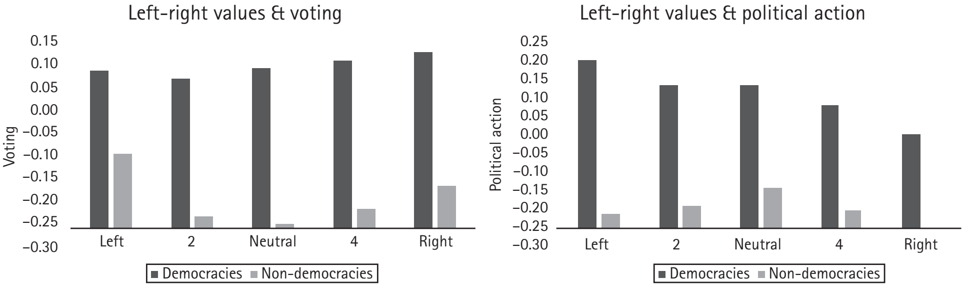

FIGURE 37.6 Left–Right Values and Political Participation in Democracies and Autocracies

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of left-right values is based on the factor scores of the four items described in footnote 3, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'left') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'right').

Overall, and unsurprisingly, we find that levels of participation are much lower in the autocracies than in the democracies. In addition, there is a tendency for the steepness of the slopes to differ between democracies and autocracies. In democracies, levels of electoral participation are not strongly related to values—the slopes are relatively flat—whereas levels of non-electoral participation tend to be more strongly related to values—the slopes are steeper than they are in autocracies. For example, Figure 37.6 (on left–right values) shows that, among people who hold similar value positions, rates of both electoral and non-electoral participation are much lower in autocracies. In the case of electoral participation, we see approximate U-shaped relationships in both types of polity, although the U-shape is more marked in autocracies than in democracies. Conversely, in the case of non-electoral participation, the slope is much steeper than it is in autocracies. Another way of putting this is that electoral participation is relatively consensual in democracies. In contrast, as Dalton and his colleagues had found, left–right values have a significantly stronger relationship with non-electoral participation in democratic countries, where there are institutionalized opportunities for voicing opposition and the personal risks from protest are less.

This pattern of flatter slopes with respect to electoral participation, but steeper slopes with respect to non-electoral participation, is mirrored in the cases of libertarian, traditional, and postmaterialist values. Thus in Figure 37.7, which explores relationships with libertarian–authoritarian values, we see that in the case of electoral participation the slope is steeper in autocracies. In contrast, the slope is steeper in democracies in the case of non-electoral participation. In other words, the strengths of the relationships between libertarian–authoritarian values and participation tend to be reversed in the two types of polity.

As expected, given the high correlation between authoritarian and traditional values, the patterns found in Figure 37.7 are largely echoed in Figure 37.8 which looks at the relationships between traditional values in democracies and autocracies.

In Figure 37.9 we report the analyses for postmaterialism. Again, there are some strong similarities with the previous findings. Thus, within democracies the slope is relatively flat in the case of electoral participation, and much steeper in the case of non-electoral participation. However, there is one puzzling anomaly: within autocracies it seems to be the postmaterialists rather than the materialists who have higher levels of electoral participation. This is somewhat puzzling and out of line with the other values where it was the

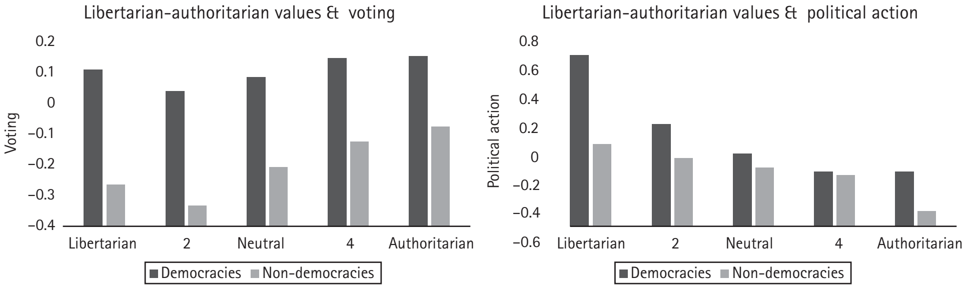

FIGURE 37.7 Libertarian–Authoritarian Values and Political Participation in Democracies and Autocracies

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of libertarian-authoritarian values is based on the factor scores of the four items described in footnote 5, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'libertarian') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'authoritarian').

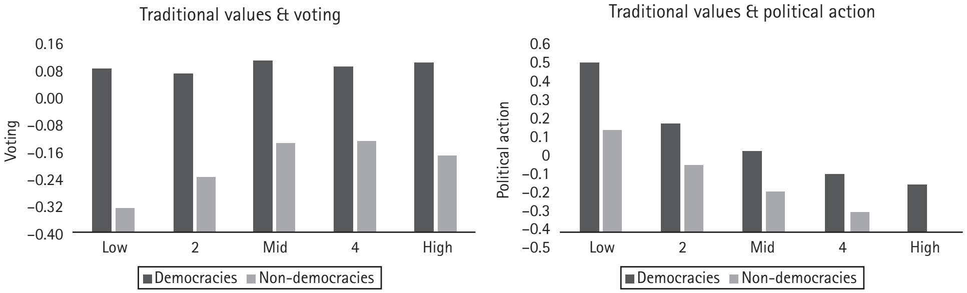

FIGURE 37.8 Traditional Values and Political Participation in Democracies and Autocracies

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of traditional values is based on the factor scores of the four items described in footnote 6, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'low') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'high').

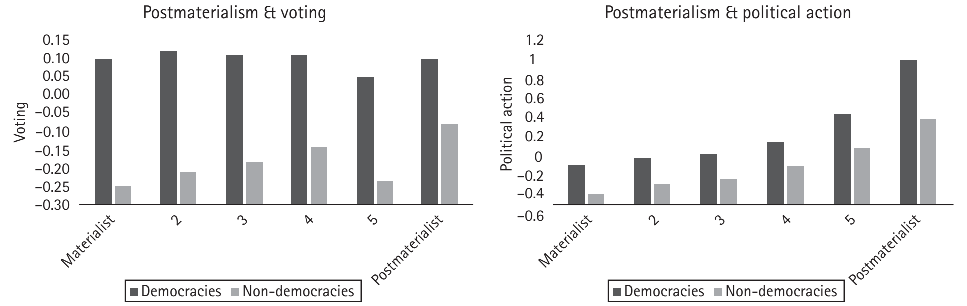

FIGURE 37.9 Materialist/Postmaterialist Values and Political Participation in Democracies and Autocracies

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of materialist-postmaterialist values differs from that of the other values, however. It is not based on quintiles of factor scores but is Inglehart's own six-category index derived from the six items described in footnote 8.

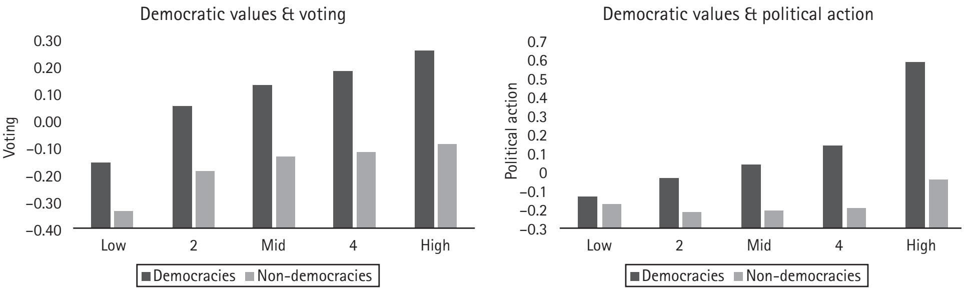

FIGURE 37.10 Democratic Values and Political Participation in Democracies and Autocracies

Source: World Values Survey 2020 early release data.

Note: The two measures of participation are factor scores based on the eight items described in footnote 1. The measure of democratic values is based on the factor scores of the five items described in footnote 10, recoded into five quintiles ranging from the 20% with the lowest factor scores (code 1, 'low') to the 20% with the highest factor scores (code 5, 'high').

authoritarians and right-wingers who had higher levels of electoral participation than the libertarians and left-wingers in autocracies. A lot depends, however, on the result for the most extreme postmaterialists—a rather small group. The finding may be a "false positive" and it would be wise to replicate it with other data.

Finally, in Figure 37.10 we look at the relationships with democratic values. There are the familiar differences between democracies and autocracies in levels of participation. But this time there is no asymmetry in the slopes. There are steeper slopes in democracies both for electoral and non-electoral participation. A natural explanation for this is that democracies, or rather those democracies where voting is not compulsory, allow people opportunities both to protest and to abstain. It would not be surprising if the relatively few citizens in a democracy who do not share its democratic values were to take advantage of the opportunity to abstain.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to explain empirically why these patterns differ. Our aim is the more modest one of showing that the political context matters. Relationships between value orientations and participation are not psychological universals but are dependent, at least to some extent, on the nature of the political context. This in turn suggests that the drivers of political participation might differ not only according to the type of action that is involved, but also according to the type of institutional context.

CONCLUSIONS

Values are strongly linked to different forms of political action, democratic values being particularly relevant to electoral participation, and postmaterialist values to non-electoral participation. To be sure, values need to be understood within the context of a wider range of influences, such as individuals' specific grievances, their resources, and the wider political opportunity structure. Indeed, values will not generally be the proximate causes of specific political actions such as participation in a particular demonstration or protest since, by definition, values are conceived as transcending particular actions and situations. Rather we can think of values as representing general frameworks shaping the kinds of action that the individual (or the community) find acceptable or desirable. They shape and circumscribe the repertoire of political actions that the individual will be likely to consider. Political attitudes towards the specific issues at stake are more likely to be the proximate causes, alongside a range of other influences.

Nor would we regard values as ultimate causes in their own right, since a person's values will in turn be the social products of the person's family, community, and nation, and of their respective histories. Values will also evolve dynamically (as illustrated by theories of the emergence and decline of postmaterialist values). They thus serve in a statistical sense as intermediary variables, albeit ones within a dynamic system.

Nevertheless, the results shown in this chapter, like those in the previous research which we have summarized, demonstrate that political values have substantial explanatory power for understanding individuals' propensities to engage in different forms of political action. By social science standards, these are strong relationships.

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CHAPTER 38

IDENTITY, EMOTIONS, AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

JAMES M. JASPER AND ANNA ZHELNINA

In the most famous example of ancient Greek oratory, Pericles sketched a collective identity for Athenians—tolerant and open, equal and brave—and used that identity to rally them behind the ongoing war with Sparta. Thucydides bestowed on the speech its prominence for later ages as part of his explanation for the origins of war. Group identities and the emotions they arouse have been acknowledged as central to war and politics ever since. The construction of friend and foe is the essence of politics, according to Carl Schmitt, whose support for the Nazis also shows the dangers of emotional group identities. In this review we hope to show that collective identities are infused with emotions, and that identities and emotions are central to every stage or aspect of political participation (Polletta and Jasper 2001; Jasper 2019).

Collective identity, group identity, and social identity are almost interchangeable terms (and we will use them interchangeably) for *how individuals feel and think about groups*: both their own identification with a group whose status, successes, and failures translate into the individual's own, but also their attribution of groupness to others (outgroups). Identities typically emerge from the interplay between a group's own sense of itself and outsiders' views of it (Huddy 2001; Stets and Burke 2000; Tajfel 1978). Although only human individuals can have the feelings and thoughts that establish a group identity, there can also be physical symbols of a group, such as a flag, and social structures, such as legal statuses or economic inequality, that sustain identities. Collective identities are emotional as much as they are cognitive (Jasper 2018).

Group identities are frequently the most stable and salient of long-run allegiances, at least in politics. They help us define who we are, and our basic values and goals. We tend to love or at least like the groups we belong to. These groups range from ethnic, gender, and national categories to smaller groupings, such as neighborhood volunteers or family and kin. We care about the group as an abstract or imagined community and we also tend to have positive feelings for individual members of that group when we encounter them. We expect to be able to trust them or be comfortable around them. We also construct identities for outsiders, as out-groups, and we tend to contrast them with our own groups, expecting to dislike, hate, mistrust, or be uncomfortable with them. Politics is motivated as much by hate, mistrust, and a desire for punishment or revenge on outgroups as it is by a desire to promote our ingroups (Kaufman 2001).

In addition to the feelings we have about our own and other groups, our group identifications shape many other emotions that we experience (van Kleef and Fischer 2016). We will label the feelings we have about fellow group members and about the group itself as *reciprocal* emotions, and the feelings that group membership stimulates toward other people and things as *shared* emotions (Jasper 1998). The shared emotions may help establish the group in the first place, but once established, that group identity (and its reciprocal emotions) suggest a range of emotions that members should feel, and especially how to feel about events and policies that affect the group (Yzerbyt, Kuppens, and Mathieu 2016).

As we come to appreciate the elaborate emotion work that goes into group construction, it becomes hard to view thinking and feeling as different, opposed activities. Group pride, hate for opponents, compassion for others, yearning for our strategic objectives, shock at threats to our groups: these are abiding emotions that are symbolically elaborated and embodied in arguments, ideologies, and books as part of even the most "rational" of thinking processes.

Our understanding of this intersection of identity and emotion reflects recent developments in the study of culture and its links to the body. Our nervous systems constantly send hundreds of signals about the state of our bodies and our connections to the world around us. Sometimes these "feeling-thinking processes" (Jasper 2018) are packaged into what we recognize as emotions, sometimes into what we label thoughts. Those labels and concepts are themselves one more process that feeds back and affects the others (Barrett 2017). Some of these packages have to do with our relationship to groups and our assessments about how those groups are doing in the world, for example if we feel they are threatened.

Political organizers, publicists, and ideologues try to shape the emotions of followers and other audiences. Some of this emotion work is fairly immediate, such as speeches or music at rallies and meetings (Traïni 2016; Weitzel 2019). Some is character work intended to stir admiration for leaders, mistrust or contempt for opponents, compassion for victims of oppression, violence, poor policies, or social problems (Jasper, Young, and Zuern 2020). In the long run, they also try to manage moral emotions and group commitments.

To some extent, we manage our own emotions by engaging in activities or going to places that we know will make us feel certain ways, just as we select music to place us in a predictable mood. A protest march invigorates our sense of outrage, a political rally sustains our admiration for a leader. We go out in pretty weather because we know it will put us in a good mood, just as we know that meeting old friends will offer joy. We also expect a thrill from crowds of like-minded participants.

Strategic action is permeated by tradeoffs and dilemmas (Jasper 2006), and thus so are collective identities (McGarry and Jasper 2015). Any identity will appeal to some members of a category or intended audience but not to others, and in fact may repulse other potential members. An identity that is embraced by large numbers of the potential group may anger or disgust outsiders and potential allies. Many groups must negotiate a balance between internal appeals to members and external strategic alliances (Bernstein 1997; Gould 2009).

In this chapter we examine the interplay of collective identities and emotions in a variety of processes involving participation: avoiding it, engaging others, continuing and making strategic decisions, and disengaging from it.

Avoiding

Most people, most of the time, do not participate in or even pay attention to politics. If we think of the span of human history, we realize that only a tiny proportion of societies have allowed any form of involvement for anyone but a handful at the top, usually sovereigns and their friends. Even today, when most nations have formal voting, many or most people are skeptical about the impact of voting on policy outcomes: political parties and representatives are indistinguishable, or corrupt, or little influenced by public opinion. For many, politics is a distant game played by and for others. Sadly, this seems a reality for more and more people in the world today.

Although it is tempting to view political apathy as somehow natural, elites actively encourage and sustain it, for instance portraying "the people" as emotional, irrational mobs. Thus, nonparticipation is something to be explained, just as participation is. The path to politics begins, or ends, in personal conversations, where norms often discourage political topics (Eliasoph 1998). In a study of a Norwegian village with an economy centered on winter sports, Norgaard (2011) found the climate crisis to be a painful issue, frustrating because so little could be done about it. She reveals the downside of a strong national identity: the oil extraction industry is seen as beneficial to the nation, although detrimental to the climate and local economy, which relied on the (shrinking) skiing season. Her subjects also felt fear for their future, and guilt over Norway's role in climate change; they used humor and cynicism to deflect such emotions. Potentially mobilizing themes could not even be seriously discussed, preventing local residents from considering any collective efforts to protect the local economy and the beloved natural landscapes, even if doing so would be at odds with the national-level interests. Emotional mechanisms can also prevent the formation of new collective identities and dissolve existing ones: feelings of powerlessness and distrust of others make people dissociate from social groups and avoid collective action (Zhelnina 2020).

The impact of intimidation, repression, and fear on political participation is not as obvious as it would seem—dictators' hopes notwithstanding. Other things being equal, those who face a risk of violence or other punishment—in other words, high costs—would no doubt refrain from trying to participate. But other things are never equal, especially the perceived possibility of gains and the feelings involved with participation or nonparticipation. Hence the paradox of repression: only at very high levels (in other words military slaughter) does violence end efforts to protest or participate (Brockett 2005; Andrews 2004: 34). Short of that, it often inspires greater participation, not less.

Explaining the variable impact of repression involves not only emotions but group identities. If repression is seen as targeting one's group as a whole, greater indignation is aroused, in ways we will see later in the chapter. If group honor and benefits are at stake, its members are more likely to engage (Azab and Santoro 2017). One reason is that such targeting probably increases group identification, as Nugent (2020) demonstrates in her comparison of the effects of repression between Tunisia and Egypt before the Arab Spring. She observes that in Egypt, the selective repression against the Muslim Brotherhood cemented the group's identification as uniquely oppressed and hindered their ability to cooperate with other players in the opposition to the regime (Nugent 2020).

Individuals' reactions differ, depending on their biographies and experiences of political participation. Al-Anani (2019) found that participants in the Muslim Brotherhood who had lost friends or relatives because of repression tended to be more confrontational and ready for violence against the regime than those who had not suffered such losses. Al-Anani (2019) also observes that memories of repression had different effects: in some people, they motivated vengeance toward the regime, and in others they produced apathy and despair, the main difference being faith in leaders.

Many stigmatized groups internalize a sense of shame that decreases their feelings of political and personal efficacy, discourages them from feeling or expressing anger, and thus discourages participation. Yet these are the same identities that organizers use to recruit members to fight back, and in doing so they run the risk of reinforcing the very label they are fighting against. Some try to resolve this *stigmatized identity dilemma* (Jasper 2010) by pursuing a "politics of respectability" (Gould 2009) or by reclaiming the value of the identity, often with new, less stigmatized names for the group (Burack 2018; Jasper 2010, 2018: 139). Individuals who aspire to transcend their stigmatized identity, assimilating into higher-status groups, seem less inclined to join collective action on the basis of the stigma. Hasan-Aslih et al. (2019) found that, among Arab Palestinians, those with weaker identification with the disadvantaged group were less motivated to participate in actions demanding social change when they hoped for an improvement of relations with the dominant outgroup (Jewish Israelis). On the other hand, those with a strong identification with the in-group were more motivated to join collective action demanding equality and justice.

JOINING

Extensive research has established group identities as an important step toward political action (Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013; Huddy 2003; Van Zomeren 2015). In fact, group identification and social network ties are the two factors most often used to explain recruitment to social movements (Tilly 1978), and both depend on emotional dynamics. Individuals are recruited when they know others, have emotional affiliations with them, or identify with them (Snow, Zurcher Jr., and Ekland-Olson 1980).

For starters, group identities offer goals such as status or resources that individuals can add to their existing goals of action: gaining benefits for one's group is as important as personal benefits. Threats to a group are better prods to action because they arouse greater anger and indignation (Rydell et al. 2008; Shi et al. 2015; van Kleef and Fischer 2016; Van Stekelenburg 2006; Van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears 2008). Different sets of group-based emotions, for example, boosted Black voting in the presidential elections of 2008, when hopes for improvements of the group's position in the social and political landscape of the country led to enthusiastic turnout, and in 2016, when a "racially distinct sense of resignation" decreased turnout among Black Americans (Phoenix 2019).

Group identities help people evaluate emerging situations in light of threats or opportunities for their group, and such "group-based appraisals then result in group-based emotions, that is, emotional reactions to group concerns" (Kuppens et al. 2013: 1).

People experience certain group-based emotions when their respective group identity is activated (Seger, Smith, and Mackie 2009), and these can be either mobilizing (pride, efficacy) or demobilizing (shame, powerlessness). These group-based emotions can emerge in conversations about an issue or a situation with other group members, even without purposive activation of a particular social identity (Yzerbyt, Kuppens, and Mathieu 2016). Group-based emotions can be at the heart of the purposive recruitment processes, as Reger (2004) demonstrates in her analysis of consciousness-raising groups in the National Organization for Women (NOW). The organization used the groups to reshape individual emotions, such as anger and hopelessness, into collective, shared injustices. In this process, individual women also became motivated political actors.

Group identities can work as moral batteries (Jasper 2011), combining negative and positive emotions in a way that motivates action away from one and toward the other. Groups can offer a way out of despair or shock, for example. They can also transform anger into hope, by attaching each to the affected group identity (Wlodarczyk et al. 2017). Collective processes can themselves arouse hope, strengthen collective identity, and enhance feelings of collective efficacy (Van Zomeren et al. 2004), especially through collective events (such as protest marches) with high emotional synchrony with others (Páez et al. 2015). Moral conviction operates by politicizing a group identity, allowing group-based anger and collective efficacy (Browning, Feinberg, and Dietz 2004; Van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears 2012).

Events and circumstances can also reshape identities. The mobilization of the unemployed university graduates in the interior and south of Tunisia sparked a political identity based on the shared emotions of anger and frustration (Jöst 2020). Participation in "crowd" events can boost collective identity, unifying diverse crowds around their shared grievances, but the presence of an outgroup, an adversary, also contributes. Power and empowerment "are not simple properties of any given group but rather relations (and perceptions of relations) between groups" (Drury and Reicher 1999: 392).

Leaders usually craft and sustain group identities (Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2013). Social movements often emerge because leaders manage to attract attention to new identities, or to transform old ones, whether through inspiring language or their own personal moral example. Existing collective identities can be refashioned into political identities. Some individuals may have personal identities closely linked with moral principles, with or without a sense of group membership. Such individuals may have ended up as rescuers under the Nazi occupations (Monroe 2004), and they frequently become the moral heroes and first movers in cascades of protest. They inspire others by conjuring moral ideals and demonstrating the joys of agency, and they take on many of the costs of early mobilization (Pearlman 2018).[1]

As the idea of "imagined communities" suggests, people can identify with far-flung social groups, allowing political action on behalf of distant others. Khosrokhavar (2006) found that young Muslims in prison in France strongly identified with Palestinians, as part of a global conflict pitting Muslims against Christians and Jews. They linked the daily humiliations inflicted upon Palestinians (and Chechnyans) with the discrimination they had faced in France, and joining al-Qaeda was a way for them to assert a hope and confidence in eventual victory. In the meantime, instilling fear in "the West" (another community they could readily imagine as an outgroup) was satisfying, sometimes protecting their sense of manhood.

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[1] In this chapter we largely ignore personal identity in favor of social identities, but personal identities have an impact on participation, especially in the case of rescuers and in the biographical consequences of participation.

Compassion for a group is often the basis of action, even if participants are not members of the group (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Giugni and Grasso 2019a). Animal protectionists play on our pity for suffering animals, just as the movement against sexual abuse focuses on the suffering of innocent children. *Empathy* for others acknowledges a shared humanity, while *pity* tends to concentrate on their physical suffering without necessarily accepting similarities. Pity can dehumanize its objects, which is why it is more appropriate for children and animals than for other adults. Whittier (2001) has analyzed the tension at the heart of character work on behalf of adult survivors of child sexual abuse: they want the compassion due to what happened to them as children, but also the respect and admiration due them as survivors, adults capable of protecting others and ending the abuse. They must transcend the pity and stigma of pure victimhood.

Compassion can combine with guilt. Members of a structurally advantaged group, for example, can feel guilt and anger, which can lead to political action to address inequalities between groups, as a study of the feelings of non-Aboriginal Australians about their structural advantage over the Aboriginal group shows (Leach, Iyer, and Pedersen 2006).

The right character work frames social problems in ways that inspire action. There must be *villains* to blame, *victims* of their evil plots, and *heroes* who can set things right—what Jasper, Young, and Zuern (2018) call the "essential triad" of character work. Just as Whittier (2001) points to trade-offs between victim and hero claims by movements, so there are dilemmas over whether to ridicule opponents as minions or to demonize them into extremely menacing villains. In other words, players face an identity dilemma when they are trying to craft their opponents' identity as well as when they are creating their own (Jasper 2014: 54ff). This character work is just as influential whether applied to individuals and organizations (such as a corporation as a wrongdoer) or to categories of people (racist stereotypes, for example, which suggest that apparent victims are not as innocent as they appear). Character work can be crucial in shaping both ingroup and outgroup identities.

The emotions that lead people to participate politically are not all directly group based. For instance, having nothing left to lose—perhaps after losing family members—generates a *desperation* that can downplay the costs of risky action (Hoggett 2009: 20; Jasper 2018: 96ff). But even here, a sense of being part of a group of people with similar experiences and feelings can encourage action. Or a sense of the honor of one's family, especially the reputations of children who have been killed, can turn grief into indignation, as occurred with the famous Madres de Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires (Fisher 1989).

Staying

Once a person has started to participate in political action, she encounters a number of feelings that may encourage her to stay. Durkheim summarized the thrills of participation in a crowd as "collective effervescence," and scholars have since documented factors that contribute to this exciting sense of being part of something greater than oneself. The gathering may itself generate a temporary sense of groupness, especially through the emotional energy and emotional attention it sparks (Collins 2001, 2004), but it also reinforces or creates a sense of groupness that had already existed and/or which persists after the crowd has dispersed. Dancing, marching, and singing together reinforce collective effervescence (McNeill 1995)—mediated by feelings such as joy, efficacy, and empowerment (Lofland 1985; Perugorría and Tejerina 2013). Crowds can generate strong reciprocal feelings within a group—although a failed interaction ritual (low attendance, scattered attention, lethargy) can also dampen those feelings (Collins 2004).

Contagion, by which we come to mimic the gestures, facial expressions, and emotions of those we see around us, helps explain why crowds can reinforce both reciprocal and shared emotions: we see others angry about a recent police shooting, and we grow angry too (Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson 1994). Of course, this happens, not automatically or accidentally, but because we come to the event expecting this feeling and because we already are inclined to feel it. Our reciprocal emotions lead us to trust those we see around us.

Crafting a social identity is a key process for sustaining commitment to collective action, because "[t]hrough a process of referent informational influence, social identities can shape how people think, feel, and behave as they strive to conform to normative positions that are prototypical for the group" (Thomas, McGarty, and Mavor 2009, 195). Collective experiences with high emotional synchrony prompt stronger support for the social values and beliefs of a group among the participants (Páez et al. 2015).

Group identity seems to be a kind of filter or frame for what happens during political engagement. A feeling of efficacy or empowerment, for instance, is not a simple result of successful action, but is stronger if participation is interpreted as expressing group identity. One giant study of protestors across Europe found that they had higher levels of collective effectiveness than individual effectiveness (Giugni and Grasso 2019b: 151). Drury and Reicher (2005) compare two collective events within the same anti-road protest in London: the occupation of a green space by activists, and the eviction of the camp a month later. The occupation allowed participants to assert and impose their identity in the inter-group struggle and, therefore, to be empowered, whereas the eviction of occupants did the opposite, and re-imposed the out-groups' vision of the world. In a study of Hong Kong, Chan (2016) found that identification with political parties or with Occupy directly increased participation in the umbrella movement, but also had indirect effects by boosting ideology, anger, and a sense of efficacy.

Tausch and Becker (2013) observe that collective identity can "bridge" the emotional experiences of participants and the likelihood of their further engagement in collective action. Group-based "achievement emotions," such as pride or anger in response to a campaign's success or failure, can motivate further action. Success sparks group pride, which amplifies collective efficacy. Failure can result in anger or fear depending on the perceived resourcefulness of the group: if a group has more strength or resources than its adversary, members are more likely to feel mobilizing anger rather than demobilizing fear (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2013).

A useful caution: in some cases it may be organizational membership that offers these positive incitements to participation, and not group identification per se. In a study of political mobilization among migrants, for instance, Giugni and Grasso (2019c) find a direct effect of belonging to an association, rather than indirect effects such as increased trust, skills, or group identity.

Sometimes, even painful shared experiences can create strong reciprocal bonds among activists, increasing their commitment (Eyerman 2007; Fominaya 2010b). Repression and jail time, when associated with group action, can reinforce indignation. There is even some evidence that group solidarity can make torture more bearable (Başoğlu et al. 1994).

Social psychologists have tried to distinguish two effects of emotions, one in which the emotion itself is satisfying and one in which it leads to problem solving. The former process fits with older images of emotions as an ineffectual substitute for action, a "letting off steam" that feels good to participants. In some cases, there is evidence for this, as in the case of climate change, in which perceived possibilities for change increased hope, a satisfying emotion, but did not increase collective motivation and action (van Zomeren, Pauls, and Cohen-Chen 2019). But this disappointing result occurred in an experimental setting that lacked any strong collective identity (it is almost impossible to create strong group identities in laboratories, at least under current human-subjects rules—unlike the era of the Robbers' Cave experiments [Sherif et al. 1961]).

One of the great satisfactions of participation in politics is the opportunity to articulate and pursue moral purposes (Jasper 1997), and this moral expression may be all the more pleasurable when tied to the fate of a group. This is the reason that "empowerment" is more all-encompassing than a sense of efficacy, or a judgment about the outcomes of action: It connotes a collective actor and shared purpose. Moral empowerment may be all the more satisfying to oppressed groups mired in stigma, fear, vulnerability, and despair—in part because the resulting transition to positive feelings is a stark moral battery (Cossyleon 2018).

The transformation of shame into pride is a well-documented means, purpose, and outcome of social movements (Jasper 2018, 138–40). This moral battery has been identified especially in LGBTQ movements (Gould 2009), for example in the psychology and tactic of "coming out" (Whittier 2012) and in "pride parades" (Bruce 2016). Britt and Heise (2000) suggest that anger is a key mediator between shame and pride; the ability to express anger is the first step away from shame.

The shame-pride moral battery touches on the deepest satisfaction of protest and other forms of political participation: the assertion of basic human dignity. Even when it is ultimately unsuccessful or frustrating, acting in a way consonant with—and which expresses—our basic values is a *hypergood* unlike normal pleasures (Taylor 1989). Protesting can be satisfying even when we do not expect it to attain its stated goals, which is one reason that cost-benefit models of participation always fall short.

Those who continue their participation face strategic decisions about what to do, and here too we see the impact of identity and emotions. In facing the *Janus dilemma*, those who identify strongly with their group naturally want more resources and attention to flow to the movement group rather than to outsiders. The satisfactions of a movement identity can crowd out concern with external impacts, which is why many groups turn inward after defeat (Rupp and Taylor 1987) —and sometimes why they are defeated in the first place (Mansbridge 1986). In experiments, Black Americans who are angry about race tend to donate more to indigenous Black organizations and less to universalistic organizations (Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019). On the other hand, disappointment may not be sufficient to extinguish hope and confidence once these feelings have built up; activism may simply take new forms, find new arenas (Allam 2018).

Several scholars of protest have found that the motives of the same participants can change over time. White activists for racial justice, according to Warren (2010), frequently joined out of deep moral shocks, but remained because they developed caring friendships with Black Americans and identities as racial-justice activists. Empathy for those suffering often brings people into a movement, but it also keeps them there as it shapes and interacts with other emotions during their participation (Doidge and Sandri 2019).

The emotions of identity also influence a group's willingness to demonize its opponents, which in turn shapes its strategies. Strategic players must grapple with the *naughty-or-nice dilemma*: should they act aggressively, sometimes violently, in order to intimidate opponents and those in power, or play by the rules in order to be admired rather than feared by those other players? Those who hope for harmony, respect, or assimilation are less likely to engage in protest or to favor aggressive tactics (Bernstein 1997; Gould 2009; Hasan-Aslih et al. 2019). Stigmatized identities can be hidden, redefined, or proudly proclaimed as a badge of honor.

Portraying your opponents as evil and threatening is valuable rhetoric for recruiting members and attracting attention to a social problem, but it may discourage negotiation, compromise, and eventual settlement. Exaggerated rhetoric leads to political polarization, as we have seen in Trump's United States with its vicious culture wars and mutual misunderstanding. What does a victorious group do to its old enemies after a revolution or civil war? If they are small in number, they can be expelled or sometimes exterminated. If they have been portrayed as irredeemably evil, this is the logical implication. But if they can be depicted as ignorant minions, dupes of some other villain, then they can be forgiven and reincorporated into the nation.

QUITTING

If social identities can draw people into political participation, they can just as easily pull them out. People can reject one identity, perhaps out of a sense of betrayal, and they can be enticed into a new one. There are always competing identities on offer, and new ones frequently emerge. Any existing collective identity harbors many sub-identities within it, and they may develop animosities that destroy the umbrella identity. Social movement scholars have explored the tradeoffs of strong identities and their implications for social movement cohesion or fragmentation, and pointed out that a movement's sub-identities can be detrimental to the overall movement (Fominaya 2010a; Peters 2018). Fominaya (2010b) examines the reasons why some autonomous groups in the Global Justice Movement managed to maintain a collective identity and commitment among their members while other disintegrated. She finds that some initiatives came apart because their core arenas, the participatory assemblies of the activists, failed to fulfill participants' "emotional needs" and were "hostile," even when they were able to be affective and generate action.

Solidarity can fracture fast, in part because group loyalty to a subunit of a movement is often stronger than identification with the movement itself. Some movements are officially composed of small cells or affinity groups, and most informally depend on clusters of friends and comrades. These small groups may exist prior to a movement, or they may emerge in the heat of activism (Polletta 2002). The *band-of-brothers dilemma* is that it is easier to form strong commitments to those of a small group who know each other personally, but movement leaders must exploit those local affiliations in support of the entire movement. When these loyalties conflict, the broader groups may fragment into their smaller components, especially when these groups are "competing to have their own views universally accepted" (Saunders 2008).

At the extreme these smaller components may be romantic dyads, or couples, as activists drop out to be with spouses, or in other cases with children, in other words retreating into private life. Goodwin (1997) describes how the revolutionary Huks in the Philippines dealt with such divided loyalties, including allowing participants to take "forest wives" without divorcing their legal wives back home. "Burnout" is often proffered as an explanation for why individuals leave intense political mobilizations, as people try to balance the satisfactions of private and public life (Hirschman 1982), but there are frequently group dynamics rather than individual calculations lying behind this dynamic (Saunders et al. 2012).

Participants sometimes defect because of changes in how a group's or movement's collective identity is presented or rethought. They may feel that it no longer includes them—although this rejection often sparks indignation and leads to the founding of new movements. The best example may be the US lesbian rights movement that emerged out of rejection by "the" women's movement, and class—and race/ethnicity-based women's movements also emerged out of a feeling that the women's movement did not speak for them.

Discussions of social identities frequently ignore the fact that there are many ways to hold an identity. Any group, organization, or movement offers diverse roles, some more central to a public identity (and more involved in constructing it) than others. In a study of extremist movements, Horgan (2009) refers to *role migration* as recruits first join, pursue a kind of apprenticeship, sometimes become central members, but also—after defeat, disagreement, or disillusionment—find roles outside the group.

As movements shrink, mutual recriminations often accelerate the process, as activists assign blame for what went wrong (Gould 2009). The fault lines typically reflect earlier disagreements over strategic dilemmas, or sometimes implicit conflicts that had been submerged when a movement was expanding. As the Amsterdam squatters' movement declined under pressure from the state, two factions emerged on either side of the naughty-or-nice dilemma: those (mostly men) who believed in armed confrontation with the state, and those (mostly women) who wished to retreat into private life for self-protection (Owens 2009). Sadness and despair did not disappear, but were channeled into anger and indignation against former comrades as well as against state authorities.

CONCLUSION

Group attachments are one of the key building blocks to all human action, and especially for political action. Humans orient themselves in the world through their feelings, positive and negative, about various groups. So, we see a full range of emotions at play, both directed at groups and shaped by group identities, as individuals move in and out of political participation.

Again, and again we find moral batteries at play: combinations of positive and negative emotions—whether at the same time or in succession—that help people initiate or continue their participation. These can be imposed on people by events or by organizers, but they can also be crafted by participants themselves who know what effects the emotions are likely to have on themselves. We also see *hotspots*, arenas in which moral batteries are charged to a high degree and may lead to surprising decisions—just the kind of situation that ancient Greeks feared in rhetoric addressed to crowds (Airas 2019).

The feelings and knowledge that participants experience in politics mark their subsequent lives, in what an extensive literature calls the *biographical consequences* of activism (Fillieule et al. 2018; Vestergren, Drury, and Chiriac 2017). They are more likely to participate in future political efforts, and to craft lives in sync with the values they developed through politics. This is often a matter of personal identity, but participants also often retain some sense of social identity, either as a cohort marked by events such as 1968 or as part of a specific movement, often the movement that first drew them into activism. Presumably, these solidarities with groups could be reignited in future efforts.

Like all actions, political actions and decisions are always entwined with emotions. They are not based on neutral calculations of likely outcomes; both the outcomes and the possible paths of actions carry positive and negative feelings with them at all times. Decisions reflect our anticipation about the bundles of positive and negative emotions waiting along each path of action. Social identities are among the most salient factors shaping these emotions, and so they are among the primary causes of political participation.

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CHAPTER 39

BRIDGING COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE EXPLANATIONS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

ALESSANDRO NAI

Previous chapters have discussed the individual roots of politics participation in terms of, for example, values, attitudes, sociodemographic differences, and identity. In this chapter we focus on two sets of individual drivers: cognitive attitudes (knowledge, interest, efficacy) and emotions. In the first part their direct role on political engagement will be discussed, with a special attention to recent literature investigating their interplay—most notably, the fact that emotions should be expected to have a more fundamental role on participation at higher levels of cognitive attitudes (Miller 2011; Valentino et al. 2009; Magni 2017). In the second part, we adopt a larger viewpoint and embed the role of cognition and emotions into the broader framework of information effects on political engagement. Beyond its social and psychological roots, political participation is often a function of exposure to political information—most notably when it comes to partisan information campaigns during elections (e.g., Nai and Walter 2015). As we will argue, the effects of such information are likely to be mediated by cognition and emotions: they link exposure to (dark) political information to its subsequent behavioral effects.

The Direct Effect of Cognition and Emotions on Political Participation

Cognitive Attitudes

In line with the "psychological model" of turnout, the role of cognitive political attitudes—interest, knowledge, efficacy—to shape political participation has received a robust attention in the literature (e.g., Almond and Verba 1963; Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996; Neuman 1986;

Galston 2001; Reichert 2016), as discussed in detail elsewhere in this volume (see Heath, Richards and Jungblut, Chapter 37, this volume). The overarching rationale supporting the psychological model is deftly summarized in the meta-analysis by Kaat Smets and Carolien van Ham (2013): cognitive attitudes, the authors say, "are expected to function as resources, lowering the costs of voting and increasing turnout [. . .]. Moreover, citizens that are politically interested and involved are expected to have higher levels of confidence in the influence they have on the political system" (Smets and van Ham 2013: 354).

In his seminal review article, William A. Galston (2001) discusses several reasons why political knowledge is such a fundamental driver of political engagement, which we briefly summarize here. Knowledge, Galston says, "helps citizens understand their interests as individuals and as members of groups. The more knowledge we have, the better we can understand the impact of public policies on our interests, and the more effectively we can promote our interests in the political process" (p. 223). In this sense, knowledge helps citizens connect their own preferences with the political offer, and shows the benefits of engagement. Knowledge, furthermore, "increases the consistency of views across issues and across time" (p. 223), which in turn has been shown to be a consistent support for participation—for instance, some evidence exists that turnout is depressed among voters with ambivalent opinions (e.g., Lazarsfeld et al. 1944; but see Nir 2005; Yoo 2010). Additionally, Galston (2001) argues, lack of political knowledge fosters mistrust and alienation— "ignorance is the father of fear, and knowledge is the mother of trust" (p. 224)—and a more generalized support for democratic values. All in all, strong reasons exist to expect knowledge (and other proximate cognitive attitudes) to strongly foster political participation. The general conclusion about the centrality of cognitive attitudes—and especially of interest and motivation—of course, largely extends also to non-electoral participation, such as participation in protest events or engagement in social movements (Putnam 2000; Verba et al. 1997; McAdam 1986; Schussman and Soule 2005).

Recent research investigating the deep underlying drivers of participation, looking for instance at personality and dispositional individual differences (Gerber et al. 2011; Rasmussen 2016; Vecchione and Caprara 2009; Denny and Doyle 2008) or the genetic profile of individuals (Dawes et al. 2014; Weinschenk et al. 2019), somewhat reduced the saliency of cognitive attitudes as primary drivers of political participation—because, of course, such attitudes are also partially driven by these deep-seated factors, and as such their direct effect is at times largely confounded (e.g., Weinschenk et al. 2021). The fact that political attitudes such as the decision to acquire knowledge or political motivation in general are, from a cognitive perspective, rather proximate (and somewhat overlapping) with behavioral attitudes such as the decision to vote (Lassen 2005; Larcinese 2007; Denny and Doyle 2008) does not help to disentangle the unique contribution of political attitudes on participation. Nonetheless, cognitive political attitudes remain a central set of factors in contemporary models of political participation—as illustrated for instance by the fact that the psychological model is used as theoretical framework in a large number of studies about the individual-level drivers of turnout (Smets and Van Ham 2013).

Emotions

The role of emotions in politics, and in political participation more specifically, has been documented in countless studies over the past three decades, as discussed elsewhere in this volume (see Jasper and Zhelnina, Chapter 38, this volume). Emotions matter for political behaviors because they have a structuring effect on cognitive processes (Damasio 1994). Cognitive mechanisms that yield unconscious affective evaluation of objects are always in stand-by in the human mind, and as such they tend to be "far more active, and hence far more important, than conscious cognitive processing" (Marcus 2000: 231). Indeed, "without the ability to reference emotions people remain incapable of making so called rational decisions" (McDermott, 2004: 694). Of course, what specifically an "emotion" is, how many relevant and discretely distinct emotions exist, and what their neurophysiological and cognitive structure is are questions on which the jury is still out (e.g., Russell 1980; Zajonc 1984; Scherer 2005), and it is well outside the scope of this chapter to venture into such territory. When it comes to the centrality of emotions in politics, a theoretical model has been particularly central in the literature—the Affective Intelligence Model (AIT; Marcus 2000; Marcus and MacKuen 1993; Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000; MacKuen, Wolak, Keele, and Marcus 2010). The AIT, in a nutshell, starts from the assumption that a handful of "emotional systems" exist in the human mind, working in parallel and activated as a function of the situation and the exposure (or not) to novel sensorial stimuli. On the one hand, the surveillance system "generates anxiety/unease or relaxation/calm as incoming information suggests it is either safe or potentially unsafe to go about one's business as usual" (Brader 2006: 60). On the other hand, the disposition system "generates enthusiasm/satisfaction or depression/frustration as incoming information reports that the execution of one's plans either matches or does not match expectations (or success)" (Brader, 2006: 60). The disposition system can also generate sentiments of anger, stemming from "a diminishment to one's well-being or an attack on one's beliefs and goals for which others are perceived to be responsible" (Steenbergen and Ellis 2006: 113).

Anxiety, anger, and enthusiasm have thoroughly different effects on political engagement. In general, anger tends to be associated with a greater political engagement, whereas anxiety with a lower one. Anger stems from a desire to (re)gain control over an incident that creates a situation that individuals feel as inappropriate; it results "when individuals attribute responsibility to an external agent for inappropriately blocking a goal, acting unfairly, violating a shared norm, or damaging a cherished value" (Best and Krueger 2011: 89). In this sense, anger is naturally associated with approach-related behaviors (Harmon-Jones and Allen 1998). Best and Krueger (2011) investigate the negative emotional reactions to US government monitoring initiatives, and show that such initiatives tend to generate more anger than anxiety; importantly, anger associated with monitoring activities is positively associated with engagement (an additive index of political participation), whereas anxiety is not. Similarly, leveraging unique panel survey data collected before and after the "Charlie Hebdo" terrorist attacks in Paris in early 2015, Vasilopoulos (2018) shows that feelings of anger towards the attacks boosted participation in what he calls "high-cost and high-risk" events, such as participating in political rallies in public just mere days after the deadly attacks, whereas fear suppressed participation in such events, albeit it was significantly associated with positive changes in information-seeking habits. Similar trends are also found by Valentino et al. (2011), triangulating experimental and observational data. Anger, unsurprisingly, has been strongly associated with participation in protest events, often driven by a sense of indignation ("the morally grounded form of anger:" Jasper 2014: 208). Iyer et al. (2007) investigated the emotional drivers of participation to protest events against the US and UK governments' interventions in Iraq in the early 2000s. The authors show that respondents, after being exposed to an experimental treatment cuing a threat against their country's image, reported higher participation intentions when feeling sentiments of anger and (partly) shame, but not guilt—confirming the agentic role of anger when turned against perceived culprits reduces individual well-being. Triangulating observational and experimental data in Germany, Stürmer and Simon (2009) show that group-based anger boosts willingness to engage politically "to the extent that this behavior provided the opportunity of cathartic reduction in aggressive tensions" (2009: 681).

Anger and anxiety have thus a radically different role to play in political engagement: anger reinforces tendencies towards action and is often associated with risk-seeking behaviors (Lerner and Keltner 2000, 2001). Inversely, "anxiety prepares the body to act, but anxious individuals may shrink from action" (Valentino et al. 2011: 159). Still, from a normative standpoint, anxiety has a positive role to play in decision-making and behavioral attitudes because it potentially reduces partisan obtuseness. Counter-attitudinal information, usually discarded as irrelevant by motivated-reasoning incentives (Kunda, 1990; Slothuus and De Vreese 2010), is now considered, processed, and perhaps even integrated in updated cognitive schemes. Anxiety, in other terms, carries intrinsically the potential to remove our partisan blinders—even if recent evidence suggests that anxiety for the out-group does not really reduce affective polarization (i.e., partisan dislike for political opponents; McLaughlin et al. 2020). On the other hand, always from a normative standpoint, anxiety can be a powerful tool to persuade the masses. Exactly because anxiety makes individuals less reliant on their predispositions, the chances that they might be persuaded to change their opinion dramatically increases. The guiding role of partisan attitudes is highjacked by anxiety-inducing information. Nai et al. (2017) discuss a quasi-experimental design that is able to show this exact phenomenon at play. When presented with counter-attitudinal information on an issue (that is, information that goes against their opinion about that same issue), respondents that feel anxious about the issue are more likely to be swayed: they adjust their opinion in the direction of the persuasive messages they were exposed to.

In discussing the work of Carver (2004) about the "Behavioral Approach System," Valentino et al. (2011) note that enthusiasm, like anger, can stimulate participation because it is associated with the tendency to secure pre-established goals: "If we reach our goals more quickly than expected, we experience enthusiasm. [. . .] If progress toward our goals is slower than expected, we experience frustration and anger. Anger and enthusiasm, then, both lead us to take action in order to achieve or preserve goals" (2011: 160). Positive emotions in general carry a potential of mobilization. In discussing the role of emotions in collective mobilization, Bar-Tal et al. (2007) argue that hope, because it "consists of cognitive elements of aspiring and expecting a positive goal accompanied by positive feelings about the anticipated events or outcomes, [. . .] serves as a prism for the worldview as well as a source for collective mobilization and action to achieve the set goal" (2007: 449). Furthermore, negative and positive emotions have been shown to mutually reinforce individual dispositions to engage in protest events (Sabucedo and Vilas 2014), even if the primacy of negative emotions over positive ones to orient people's lives should not be underestimated (Jarymowicz and Bar-Tal 2006). Readers interested in the role of emotions in driving political participation are encouraged to consult the excellent books by Ted Brader (2006, on emotional appeals in general), Bethany Albertson and Shana Gadarian (2015; on fear and anxiety), and Steven Webster (2020, on rage).

The Interplay of Cognition and Emotions

Some evidence exists that cognition and emotions interact in shaping political attitudes and behaviors. More specifically, increasing evidence suggests that it is especially among citizens with higher levels of cognitive attitudes that emotions play a more fundamental role in driving their behaviors and attitudes. Gibson et al. (2020) present indirect evidence in this sense, showing that the effects of negative emotions (hatred, fear, and anger) on political intolerance are not consistently stronger among respondents low in political sophistication—providing a first indication that it is not among the politically unsophisticated that emotions matter, as many intuitively believe. Miller (2011) shows that emotions tend to be particularly influential on behaviors of individuals that dispose of a higher political sophistication. This effect is based on two, sequential mechanisms; on the one hand, Miller writes, "[w]hen high sophisticates encounter political stimuli, their greater understanding of politics may enhance their ability to connect those objects to their goals and desires, better enabling them to make emotional appraisals" (p. 578). On the other hand, "[i]f high sophisticates are more likely to emotionally appraise political stimuli because they understand politics better, they may also better understand how to translate emotion into political action" (p. 579). Similarly, in his seminal book on emotional advertising, Ted Brader (2006) shows that enthusiasm and fear appeals are more likely to influence participation (voting and activism) of citizens high in political sophistication (pp. 96–103). In Brader's words, "[T]he energizing effect of enthusiasm cues on willingness to volunteer, intention to vote in the primary, and intention to register appears to be contingent on higher levels of political expertise. [… Similarly,] fear appeals have a broad power to motivate citizens who are knowledgeable about politics" (Brader, 2006: 101–102). The interplay between emotions and political sophistication was also confirmed in the experimental study by Nai et al. (2017). The authors exposed respondents to counter-attitudinal arguments (that is tailored arguments that were opposed to the respondents' reported initial opinion) on climate change, in order to experimentally induce opinion change. Their investigation revealed that respondents that declared experiencing higher levels of issue-related anxiety were more likely to adjust their initial opinion after exposure to the counterargument, in line with the original tenets of the Affective Intelligence Theory (Marcus 2000; Marcus and MacKuen 1993; Marcus, Neuman, and MacKuen 2000; MacKuen, Wolak, Keele and Marcus, 2010) At the same time, the effects of anxiety were moderated by political sophistication—the predicted likelihood for opinion change were greater for respondents scoring higher on political knowledge and (especially) interest in politics. Using NES panel data, Valentino et al. (2009) show that the positive effect of political efficacy on engagement (in this case, intended participation in elections) exists especially when respondents feel angry about policy threats ("the likelihood of unwanted policy change if the opposing candidate were elected," p. 312). This effect does not exist when respondents feel anxious about such threats, however. They argue that

> [p]olicy threats trigger anger or fear depending on existing levels of internal efficacy. Those confident in their political abilities will experience anger in response to policy threats. Anger, in turn, focuses energy on proactive political behaviors, perhaps even costly ones. Anger is the body's response to a frustrating situation in which we possess a sense of control and believe our future actions will lead to success in dealing with the problem at hand. [… A]nger readies citizens to fight in the political arena.
>
> (Valentino et al. 2009: 311)

These findings are confirmed by the investigation on the impact of anger about the economic crisis in the UK (Magni 2017). Using the British election panel study, the author shows that at high levels of political efficacy, anger fosters participation (and support for mainstream parties), whereas at low levels of efficacy, anger fuels demobilization (and support for populist parties). A positive interaction between anxiety and efficacy on political involvement is however discussed in Rudolph et al. (2000). Finally, Lamprianou and Ellinas (2019) confirm the positive interplay between emotions and political sophistication to drive behavioural attitudes, but show that this effect is contingent on the type of emotion under investigation: if more sophisticated respondents are more likely to change their behavior when experiencing shame, the experience of anger shifts the behavior of the *least* sophisticated ones. This finding strongly reaffirms one of the main postulates of the AIT (and of discrete models of emotions), that is, that different emotions have different behavioral effects, above and beyond the importance of the magnitude of the emotional experience.

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF COGNITION AND EMOTIONS

Politics across the world is getting darker. Leaders with a harsh character and uncompromising personality are on the rise across the globe (Nai and Martinez i Coma 2019), from Donald Trump in the US to Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, and more. Political incivility is on the rise (Wolf et al. 2012), affective polarization deepens the rift across party lines (Iyengar et al. 2019), political discussions online are increasingly toxic (Buckels et al. 2014), and attack politics is ubiquitous (Nai and Walter 2015). The dynamics of "dark politics" vastly exceed the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, it is worth discussing here one of the main components of dark politics: political negativity, that is, political attacks against opponents during election campaigns ("negative campaigning": Geer 2006; Lau and Pomper 2004; Mattes and Redlawsk 2014; Nai and Walter 2015). In this section, we argue, first, that dark campaigns matter for political engagement. We importantly then make the point that the direct effect of (dark) political information is mediated by cognition and emotion—and that, as such, these two factors have an additional *mediating* role to play to explain political mobilization, on top of their direct effect previously discussed.

The Effects of (Dark) Political Information on Participation

Several studies have suggested over the years that negative campaigning is a detrimental force in modern democracies (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995; Ansolabehere et al. 1994). Negative campaigning can have detrimental attitudinal effects. It fosters political apathy and a "gloomier" public mood (Thorson et al. 2000; Yoon et al. 2005), and sets up a "spiral of cynicism" (Cappella and Jamieson 1997) that could lead to depressed interest in the election (Ansolabehere et al. 1994; Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995). These detrimental attitudinal effects of campaign negativity, in turn, are likely to depress mobilization and political activism. Negative campaigning can also depress participation more directly. Political attacks might work as intended and reduce voting intentions for the target of the attacks. However, because voters often explicitly indicate disliking political attacks (Fridkin and Kenney 2011; but see Mattes and Redlawsk 2014), voting intentions for the sponsor of the attacks are also likely to shrink. In a contest where only a handful of candidates compete (e.g., US general election) and electoral dynamics are often the result of a zero-sum-game, this simultaneous reduced voting intention for the target and the sponsor of attacks is likely to result, quite logically, in political demobilization. Dynamics of negative campaigning are of course more complex in non-majoritarian systems (Nai and Walter 2015).

Several studies disagree with the initial premise the negativity is necessarily detrimental (Jackson et al. 2009; Lau and Rovner 2009), and widespread evidence also exists that negative campaigning has a positive role to play when it comes to political mobilization (e.g., Kahn and Kenney 2004; Niven 2006; Pinkleton and Garramone 1992). An excellent account on the reasons why negative campaigning should mobilize the crowds is offered by Martin (2004). The author, triangulating content-analyzed data about the content of campaign ads and voter data in the US, argues, first, that the public tends to harbor deep concerns about the future of their country, and that such concerns can be triggered to encourage mobilization. Such "republican duty" starts from the assumption that "obligations to vote and otherwise participate in government are contingent on perceptions of external, societal circumstances, specifically threats to the community" (p. 549), which are of course heightened by exposure to political attacks amongst competing actors. Second, Martin (2004) argues, exposure to campaign negativity can arouse anxiety, which (as we have seen) in turn stimulates attention: "One of the primary goals of negative campaigns is to paint opponents in the worst possible light. These efforts may raise fears about the individual candidates, especially for partisans. Raised anxiety because of negative advertisement should foster interest in campaigns, and plausibly participation" (p. 550). Third, from a rational choice standpoint, negative campaigning should cue voters that the race is close, which naturally increases the marginal utility of participating for voters, "[i]f potential voters believe that the contest will be close, they will also believe that their vote will be of greater consequence" (p. 550). Recent evidence from consensual Switzerland, a particularly hard-case scenario when it comes to the saliency and effectiveness of political attacks, also suggests that parties can use negative campaigning to mobilize their own voters, beefing up the mobilization potential of their base (Stuckelberger 2021). Although research in this sense remains limited, the US presidential elections in 2016 and 2020 provide circumstantial evidence that harsher campaigns can have a mobilizing effect on a certain segment of the electorate, who seem to like darker and more uncompromising forms of politics.

The Mediated Effects of (Dark) Political Information

Exposure to (dark) political information elicits emotions and fosters cognitive attitudes. Looking at Dutch panel data, Jacobs et al. (2019) show that exposure to news generates negative emotions about the economy, which in turn drives anti-Muslim attitudes, in line with several studies highlighting that negative news-framing strongly shapes negative emotions (Lecheler et al. 2013; Na et al. 2010). Looking more specifically at the content of election campaigns, consistent evidence shows that voters react emotionally to exposure to campaign content. Roseman et al. (2020) show that respondents exposed to political attacks tend to feel contempt (revulsion, rejection), more than anxiety or anger, and that feelings of contempt drive their electoral choices. Leveraging experimental data, Gervais (2017) shows that exposure to incivility by political elites generates feelings of anger in respondents, especially when such incivility is directed towards the in-group. And exposure to populist communication is associated with the eliciting of more negative emotions (Wirz et al. 2018).

Unsurprisingly, much evidence exists that consumption of political information in general enhances cognitive (political) attitudes. For instance, exposure to news information about presidential elections influences knowledge about issues and candidates (Chaffee et al. 1994), consumption of late-night satirical shows is positively associated with recognition and (in part) recall of political issues (Hollander 2005), voters recalling political advertising tend to have a more precise understanding of candidates' issue positions (Brians and Wattenberg 1996), internet access and exposure to online information about elections are positively associated with political efficacy and knowledge (Kenski and Stroud 2006), and consumption of newspapers and online news tends to foster interest in politics (whereas the causality is somewhat reversed for television news: Boulianne 2011). Looking more specifically at election campaigns, evidence exists that negative messages can convey useful information and stimulate the interest and motivation of voters (Finkel and Geer 1998; Martin 2004; Geer 2006; Fridkin and Kenney 2008). For instance, Brians and Wattenberg (1996) show that exposure to negative ads is positively associated with greater issue knowledge about competing candidates (see also Niven 2006). In a case study about the 2016 general elections in Australia, Carson et al. (2020) show that the "Mediscare" campaign launched by the Labor party, combining both a political attack against the Liberals and an anxiety-eliciting appeal, raised the salience of the health-care issue in the eye of the voter (and shifted voting patterns in marginal electoral districts). All in all, negative campaigning "may provide voters with important information on the weak spots of political actors and should therefore enable them to make more informed political decisions" (Haselmayer 2019: 365).

Exposure to political information is likely to elicit emotional responses and foster cognitive attitudes. Because emotional states and cognitive attitudes are strongly associated with political engagement, as discussed in the previous section, they can be expected to mediate the direct effect of political information on participation discussed in the initial section. Linking panel data and a content analysis of media content, de Vreese and Boomgaarden (2006) show that exposure to media with high political content is positively associated with both knowledge gains and likelihood to participate. Exposure to campaign negativity hampers information-seeking in traditional new media, and as such in turn indirectly depresses civic and political participation (Shah et al. 2007). More on point, Jung et al. (2011) show that political knowledge and efficacy are important mediators of the relationship between exposure to information and online/offline political participation. The emotional responses to political information also have been shown to mediate its effects. For instance, episodic and thematic frames affect policy opinions differently depending on the intensity of emotions elicited by exposure to the frames (Aarøe 2011), a finding confirmed and expanded by Lecheler et al. (2013), according to whom it is especially the experience of anger and enthusiasm that mediate the effects of news-framing on opinions. Miller (2011) discusses perhaps the best example of the importance of mediated effects to political advertising, and the interplay between cognition and emotion in such a mediated process. The famous "Daisy ad," one of the central features of the 1964 presidential election:

> aimed to scare viewers into voting for Johnson by making them think that Barry Goldwater would be reckless with nuclear weapons, threatening desires for peace and security. Viewers needed a certain level of understanding, though, to get the meaning of the ad. Those who were

> attentive enough to know about the candidates' respective positions and who were interested in Cold War tensions were arguably more likely to understand the ad well enough to react with fear. Conversely, unsophisticated voters may not have grasped the message, making them less likely to feel afraid.
>
> (Miller 2011: 578–579).

In the example, knowledge allows the eliciting of emotional responses, which in turn were likely to drive behavioural and attitudinal effects.

If mediated effects effectively capture the embeddedness of exposure to political information, cognitive and affective responses, and behavioral attitudes, they are not the end of the story. First, exogenous contextual circumstances are likely to intervene. Karp and Banducci (2008), in a widely cited article, investigate the interplay between institutional settings and individual attitudes to drive electoral participation across 27 countries, and show that proportional electoral systems enhance the positive role of political efficacy, "the feeling that one's vote is potentially decisive" (2008: 311). Similarly, Tolbert et al. (2003) show that exposure to direct democratic instruments (ballot initiatives) fosters both turnout and political knowledge, hinting at confounding effects of the electoral offer.

Second, and perhaps even more fundamentally, the causality between exposure to political information and attitudes is more complex than simple mediation models can account for. Boulianne (2011), looking at panel data from the American National Election Study, shows the existence of both causal mechanisms. On the one hand, consumption of newspapers and online news tends to foster interest in politics: this first causal mechanism is in line with the literature discussed earlier. On the other hand, consumption of news on television is more likely for those already having a high prior political interest. This second perspective, which Pippa Norris (2001) calls "reinforcement" (versus the "mobilization" perspective), starts from the assumption that media use—and exposure to (and consumption of) political information more in general—is a function of higher cognitive attitudes, such as interest and motivation, in such a way that it "feeds preexisting interest in public affairs and reinforces this political interest and political engagement" (Boulianne 2011: 148). This reversed causality between information and attitudes has been shown in many empirical investigations. For instance, Eveland et al. (2005) discuss the underling role of interest in politics to drive *both* information consumption and political knowledge, which are in their words "spuriously related" (2005: 424; see also Xenos and Moy 2007). Shah and Scheufele (2006) show that opinion leaders, characterized by high prior levels of political interest, tend to voluntarily seek out political information on traditional news and online, "likely as a way to maintain their environmental surveillance and structural influence" (2006: 1). Similarly, David (2009) highlights that political motivation, itself most likely driven by deep psychological dispositions, tends to promote news consumption and (indirectly) political knowledge.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have made the case that cognition and emotions drive political engagement. Beyond what is discussed elsewhere in this volume (see Heath, Richards and

Jungblut, Chapter 37, this volume and Jasper and Zhelnina, Chapter 38, this volume), we have made two central claims. First, emotions and cognition have a direct role to play for political engagement, both directly and via specific joint dynamics—most notably, the fact that emotions have a stronger role on participation at higher levels of cognitive attitudes (Miller 2011; Valentino et al. 2009; Magni 2017). Second, above and beyond their direct (and joint) effect, emotions and cognition have a fundamental *mediating* role: they fuel the effects of political information (e.g., Aarøe 2011; Miller 2011). These two claims, jointly, echo a broader model for the drivers of mobilization, based on both psychological and communicational mechanisms. To be sure, what has been discussed in this chapter reflects only a small part of the psychological and informational dynamics at stake. Importantly, the dynamics at stake are likely to be also a function of deeper individual differences in voters exposed to political information and engaging in political mobilization. Most notably, recent research has shown that the dispositional profile of those exposed to political attacks matters greatly to determine whether such attacks are ultimately successful or not (Fridkin and Kenney 2011, 2019; Nai and Maier 2020). For instance, Weinschenk and Panagopoulos (2014) show that respondents high in extraversion are more likely to be mobilized by negative campaign messages, whereas respondents high in agreeableness tend to be demobilized. Kalmoe (2019) finds that the usage of "aggressive metaphors" tends to mobilize voters with "aggressive traits" (e.g., low agreeableness), and Nai and Maier (2020) show that evaluations of the sponsor after exposure to political attacks were more positive for respondents high in psychopathy; these latter were also more likely to have a worse opinion of the target of the attacks. All in all, exposure to dark communication is potentially detrimental for some, but part of the electorate clearly likes a more aggressive way of doing politics. These results are particularly noteworthy having the cognitive and emotional effects of communication in mind, suggesting the relevance of a new research agenda investigating the interplay between individual differences and predispositions, exposure to dark communication, cognitive attitudes and information processing, emotional reactions to information, and political mobilization.

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PART VII

PROCESSES

CHAPTER 40

POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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THE formation of political attitudes and individual behavior remains a relatively complex and opaque process. It involves both cognitive and affective factors: learning and acquiring knowledge in the cognitive domain, and modes of projection, identification, and internalization in the affective domain. Disentangling these two components of the process is not an easy task. Another difficulty in grasping the mechanisms through which the process operates lies in the temporal dynamics of both its form and content. Socialization is an ongoing process that develops over the course of a lifetime and is never fully completed, and several prominent theories have argued it mainly takes place in the "formative years" of early adulthood and have shown the impact that the "impressionable-years" can have on the durability of attitudes and behavior across the life span (Mannheim 1927, Sears 1975).

Research in this field originated in the United States at the end of the 1950s and sought above all to clarify to what extent children and adolescents acquired political ideas and values in the family, school environment, relationships with their peers and through different ways of experiments they can develop during this specific and decisive period of their life. The aim was to identify the mechanisms through which political attitudes and behaviors are transmitted across the generations so that the stability of the political system might be better understood (Greenstein 1965, Easton and Dennis 1969, Renshon 1977). These early works also had for objective to better identify the main agents of socialization with whom young people were confronted and to measure their respective influence. While today the importance of primary socialization and the impact of the mechanisms in operation in early political development continue to be of interest, research in this field now focuses on the diversity of ways in which individuals form their political identities, develop their citizenship practices and more broadly build their relationships to democracy. Most of the research carried out today looks at the plurality of determinants and circumstances that shape the conditions for individual political involvement to take place. Socialization is subject to social change and is the result of arbitrations and readjustments in the course of societal and political developments affecting the social groups and modeling the life trajectories of individuals (Osborne, Sears, and Valentino 2011; Grasso 2014, 2016).

This chapter focuses on socialization considered both as a background (meaning a set of roots, predictors, and determinants that fix a structural core in the political identity of the individual) and as a process (integrating the idea that this background evolves and that the resulting socialization is constantly being re-defined over the course of a lifetime), with the effects of time, generation, and life cycle intermingling together. This paradoxical framework—the weight of familial, social, and cultural determinations on the one hand, and the constant negotiation and adjustment involved in the process of socialization on the other, provides a fascinating challenge for research in political science. Clearly, the study of socialization is intrinsically difficult, and for this reason can discourage some researchers from working in this area.

However, research questions on socialization, both as a background and as a process, are among the most compelling to work on and to study. This is because they contribute to the formulation of a deep understanding of individual political identity, and also add to our knowledge and understanding of continuity and change in the political system itself.

This chapter sheds light on recent research in this field related to a number of changes and mutations observed in our modern democracies. These changes and mutations invite a re-examination of some of the classical vectors and experiences of socialization with which individuals are confronted. It indicates useful lines of research to better understand early political socialization (background) and later adaptations to an individual's relationships to politics (including participation) over the course of a lifetime.

Political Socialization: A Changing Research Framework

The term "socialization" was first used by Emile Durkheim in his book *Education and Sociology* (1922) to define the very purpose of education considered as the inculcation of rules, values, and social norms that must be transmitted from one generation to the next to ensure the maintenance and cohesion of society. In political science, Herbert Hyman (1959) was the first to use the concept of political socialization. The functionalist conception of socialization developed by Emile Durkheim can be found in the behaviorist approach that marks early American research in this domain. The main objective was to identify the roots of adult electoral behavior and the laws that ensure the durability and balance of the political and partisan system. At that time, socialization was first and foremost an essential mechanism for the stability of political forces and the reproduction of the political system. It was conceived as having an instrumental and utilitarian function. The early American researchers developed a relatively unilateral and static representation of its mode of operation (Greenstein 1965). Thus, for them, based on the principle that it serves to educate successive generations, socialization is an instrument for the reproduction of society. Similarly, political socialization must lead children to accept electoral mechanisms and the party system as a legitimate intermediary between individuals and those in power. In this sense, political socialization is primarily seen as a mechanism for the formation of diffuse support for the political system, based on the four principles identified by Easton and Dennis that are *politicization*, *personalization*, *idealization*, and *institutionalization* (1969). Children are considered less as active actors, capable of modifying the political learnings they must assimilate, and more as passive actors, internalizing the knowledge and political identity they have inherited from their elders. For that to happen, socialization is first and foremeost "the process by which a junior member of a group or institution is taught its values, attitudes and other behaviors" (Hess and Torney 1965: 7).

Following this pioneering period, another conception of the socialization process has gradually developed, emphasizing the importance of social interactions rather than the logic of reproduction. It differs from the functionalist approach by considering the individual as a fully fledged actor in the process. According to this approach, socialization is an interactive process that results from transactions between the individual and society. It is based on certain teachings of genetic psychology and the work by Jean Piaget (1936) on child development, that highlights the importance of the mechanisms through which children interpret, incorporate, and adapt to their social and interpersonal environment. The French researcher Annick Percheron (1993), inspired by Piaget's work, focusses on political socialization conceived of as the result of interaction based on a dual process: accommodation (the capacity of individuals to adapt to the constraints of their environment) and assimilation (action taken by individuals toward their environment to ensure it is more in line with their desires). In this sense, socialization can never be reproduced identically. It always involves newness and choice of some kind and implies adjustments and negotiations at all levels of involvement that define the nature of the social bond: the individual, the family group, membership and reference groups, the political system, and society. Interactionist approaches consider socialization to be a process that matures over time but is never fully completed. It supposes a series of negotiations between primary and secondary socialization and operates over the course of the individual's lifetime (Berger and Luckmann 1966).

Most definitions of political socialization have focused on either a process or an outcome (Renshon 1977). Conceived of as a process, it can be considered as a "developmental process through which citizens mature politically" (Dawson and Prewitt 1969: 17). When seen from the perspective of outcomes, political socialization is considered as a set of mechanisms that ensure the transmission of the prevailing norms and values of a given society. In doing so, it makes a structural contribution to the stability of the social and political system. However, political socialization also operates as a mechanism for transforming and changing these systems. It makes it possible to identify innovative elements, and shifts in meaning, civic attitudes, and behaviors which lead to radical divergences from the existing political environment and modes of expression where the participation of ordinary citizens is markedly increased. In France most of the works in this field of research confirm a kind of paradox in the political socialization of younger generations: distrust in politics and relative distance towards the political system are combined with propensity to protest. The disposition to protest against society and its institutions is a common feature among this generation, whether this protest take place at the ballot boxes or shapes collective mobilization. Political radicalism is indeed a component of the current politicization of young people (Galland and Muxel 2020, Tiberj 2017).

Whether a definition is agreed on or not, the most obvious and consensual use of the notion develops the idea that socialization that operates through a growing variety of agents and vectors (family schools, media, social networks, events …) is about the acquisition of prevailing norms, learning about politics in a multitude of ways, and ideological orientations which concretely activate the building of the individual's political identity. In order to understand the mechanisms at work in the process of political socialization, the central question is to ascertain to what extent individuals exercise autonomy when deciding on their own choices and behaviors. The fact that the socialization processes presuppose antecedents and backgrounds that weigh in and influence the political orientations of the individual is indisputable. However, a margin of action does exist, as does a political self-consciousness and personal capacity to arbitrate political orientations and manners of citizenship according to the circumstances and experiences people face—both individually and collectively.

Routinized cognitive procedures and continuity in transmission do operate. However, creativity and insight, as well as reactivity and reflexivity, also play a significant role. In a certain sense, the interactionnist approach (which has become widespread) presupposes a more individualized conception of the process of socialization. In addition, the vectors of socialization have diversified and become more complex, in particular with the importance assumed by the media, digital tools, and internet (Norris 2001; Bennett 2008; Anduiza, Jensen, and Jorba 2012). The processes of socialization and the building of a personal identity are increasingly understood to combine both determinism and predisposition, together with autonomization and experimentation. For instance, having the same ideological affiliation (Left/Right/neither Left nor Right) as his/her parents does not necessarily entail the fact of voting like his/her parents (Muxel 2020a). The same political convictions and beliefs do not necessarily lead to the same electoral choice.

Transformations in the relationships between citizens and politics are obvious in all European democracies. Engagement in traditional political institutions has declined (Dalton 2002; Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2017). Partisan allegiances have become looser in the same way that social allegiances have. Our democracies have become more reflective and the links entertained by ordinary citizens with the political system have become more individualized than they once were. The social and economical context interacts with the political socialization process (Giugni and Grasso 2016). In terms of politicization, experimentation has won out over identification and affiliation among younger generations. More and more, political involvement takes place by means of many different types of expression and action. Abstention continues to become more widespread, acquiring a certain level of democratic legitimacy as it does so. And no doubt, the endemic economic crisis that many European countries are currently facing has had an impact on political attitudes and behavior (Giugni and Grasso 2018). The understanding that citizens have of politics as well as the way in which they express their opinions and/or their participation has become less institutionalized. As a result of all these devlopments, the forms and expressions of political involvement in our contemporary democratic societies have become vastly more individualized. It has added to the climate of mistrust in politicians and political institutions, which has not ceased to increase for over thirty years (Norris 1999). Citizens have become more critical, with attitudes and behaviors based on protest defining new norms of political action. As a result, new types of political socialization, more diversified, probably more fragmented depending on social groups and ages, are emerging. The politicization of young people today is less normative, more expressive, and freer from institutional and organizational norms (Inglehart 1977). Such a climate conditions an engagement which on the one hand is more individualized, and on the other hand, collectively more reactionary, more critical, and more protest-oriented. The triptych—mistrust, intermittent voting, protest—is common to all categories of young people today. It characterizes their politicization, even if it is more or less pronounced depending on social status and level of education. Socialized in an atmosphere of disenchantment and mistrust of politics, and characterized by high levels of disillusionment and social anxiety, young people have built a new approach to politics, combining intransigence on matters of principle and a desire for pragmatism, demands for values to be upheld, and for true effectiveness to be the order of the day (Muxel 2020a).

Furthermore, the rise of populist parties and the attraction of authoritarian leadership are obvious throughout Europe and beyond. The populist framework defines new types of institutional references, electoral choices, and political behaviors, which have an impact on the political socialization at work among the youngest generations. The protest-based political culture populism encourages, has led to greater familiarity with a protest-based repertoire of opinions and/or actions, and an enhanced tendency towards extremism and radicalization, particularly among younger generations (Muxel 2020b, Pickard, Bowman and Arya 2020). The thresholds between legal and illegal forms of demonstration and/or collective mobilization are not always easy to define. Research on what might be termed "civil disobedience" stresses the tenuous nature of the border zone in which the transition to radicalization takes place. Young people today become politicized in a climate where new connections between conventional and unconventional politics are manifold. The borders between mainstream politics and radicalization have also become more porous, including on election day. Protest voting and an inclination towards extremist parties is more prevalent among younger than older generations (Galland and Muxel 2020).

In such a context, interactionist approaches to the process of socialization are more than ever heuristic, in the sense that they oblige researchers to take into account an increasingly complex framework of research and to deal with a wide spectrum of possible interactions. Earlier functionalist and behaviorist approaches have gradually lost their explanatory capacity as the political and institutional context has changed in modern democratic societies. A new framework for citizenship has emerged as the image and understanding of our globalized societies has become more complex. Cultural diversity and immigration create new challenges for citizenship and require new keys to understanding how they determine political socialization (Giugni and Grasso 2021).

Socialization as a Process that Develops over Time

An individual's political trajectory can be deciphered and understood at the crossroads of several temporalities that bring together individual and collective logics. The first of these is the historical temporality that creates a temporal and event-driven framework of choices, and draws the boundaries and contours of how these choices might be expressed. A number of studies have focused on understanding the effects of the historical context and conjuncture, making it possible to assess the impact of these transformations on the very modalities of political socialization (Ihl 2002).

The second is the generational temporality that places the individual in a community of experiences that indicate recognition of belonging to a particular generation on the basis of founding and significant events (Mannheim 1952). Each individual is part of a specific generational time frame that differentiates him or her from the experience of previous generations. Generational effects have a strong influence on the ideological structuring of individuals, especially with regard to subsequent participation in other social movements. A longitudinal survey (carried out by this author) of the same cohort of young French people between the ages of 18 and 30, enabled me to test the "impressionable years hypothesis" (Valentino and Sears 1998) showing the long-term consequences of participation in the student protest movement of autumn 1986 against reform of the educational system. It revealed the specific long-term effects of this "stratification of experiences."[1] Ten years later, the young people who had been active in the movement were still prepared to take part in collective action and had remained more favorable to this type of political protest (Muxel 2001). The historical and political conjuncture, thus, also has an active role in the construction of a generational political identity (MacAdam 1988). The events that occur from the period of adolescence to young adulthood remain more present in both the individual and collective memory of a generation (Sears and Funk 1999; Jennings and Zhang 2005; Schuman and Rogers 2004).

The third is genealogical time, that is the temporality proper to individual family history and political inheritance, marked by the reflection that all individuals must engage in themselves, and that leads either to continuity with or breaks from the generational chain. Political genealogy, tracing the antecedents of each individual, shows what was transmitted and whether the transmission was effective or not. However, it also reveals forms of individualization and empowerment in the formation of political choices and orientations, the lines of continuity but also the gaps and breaks.

The final temporality refers to the narrative identity of the individual and to the different events of his or her personal lifetime (Ricoeur 1983). It includes the points of acceleration or inflection (particularly decisive moments, marriage, the birth of children, their education, the death of parents, and so on), but also the turning points and the reorientations of marital, social, and professional trajectories, which mark the process of political socialization (Coffé and Voorpostel 2014). Certain sequences appear particularly significant. This is the case for the period of youth, which is a very specific time. It constitutes a transition period between primary socialization, characterized by the specific dependent status of the child, and the subsequent phases shaping the individual's secondary socialization, gradually leading to the affirmation of autonomy, both in terms of status and the legitimacy of choices. It is therefore the time when the individual changes from one state to another. It is a time when initial learning is tested against reality, other experiences, other vectors of socialization, and is subject to negotiation and adjustment. The study of political attitudes and behavior at this stage of life reveals a shift in the marker attributes of becoming an active citizen, particularly with regard to electoral participation. I have named this characteristic period, the "electoral moratorium," a period during which partisan choices are more malleable and political participation is more sporadic and less assured than in the later years of life (Muxel 1991, 2018). Voter registration is lowest in the younger adult years. It is also during this period that electoral abstention is at its highest. From this strict point of view, becoming a political adult comes later in life. It is not until the late 30s/early 40s that the election turnout reaches the same levels as that of all other age groups.[2] Intermittent voting is now the predominant electoral behavior above all among the youngest, but not exclusively so. Nevertheless, the earlier you vote, the stronger are the chances that you vote more constantly later in life (Franklin 2004).

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[1] In 1986, a strong protest movement of high-school and university students took place in Paris against a project (Devaquet law) conducted by the government of the time to reform the French school system. A lot of huge demonstrations were organized in several cities in France and there were clashes between young people and the police. One student died.

Socialization operates as part of a historical narrative that combines past, present, and future. It brings together the set of events in the individual's life and how these events are interpreted and justified in the context of a larger collective trajectory, where changes in mentalities and the social system as a whole are imprinted. In this sense, political involvement is neither unequivocal nor fixed once and for all. Since they are built and rebuilt over time, these different levels and types of involvement—historical, generational, familial, and personal—make a clear contribution to explaining the complexities of individual political pathways. They do not cancel out the long-term effects resulting from primary socialization that still play a structuring role such as, for example, in ideological orientations. But they introduce the necessity to interpret the values, attitudes, and beliefs these orientations carry in the light of social and cultural changes.

More than ever before, there exist both theoretical and methodological difficulties inherent in this field of research. How can the intertwined effects of time period and generation be disentangled from each other (Neunford and Niemi 2014; Grasso, Farrall, Gray, Hay, and Jenning 2019)? What elements of political socialization should be attributed to the social and political context? Has the party system an incidence on the politicization?(Westholm and Niemi 1992). What elements should be attributed to individual and familial dynamics (Verba, Schlozman, and Burns 2005)? Do individuals themselves change over time or is it the political context that changes them (Torney-Purta 2005)? Current social and political changes are forcing us to revise constantly the very notion of political socialization and to question how it functions and what it includes.

Socialization as a Background

While they remain complex and nonlinear, some of the mechanisms at work in socialization have already been identified and extensively researched. The first of these is the role of family transmission in political orientation. In the 1950s and 1960s, several American studies highlighted the importance of partisan identification and its relative stability from generation to generation within the family (Jennings and Niemi 1981). In other countries, particularly in Europe and in France, the Left–Right divide plays the same structural function (Jennings and Percheron 1981). The cleavage between Left and Right continues to play a structural role and serves the purpose of enabling individuals to define their opinions and political commitments (Fuchs and Klingemann 1989; Mair 2007). Nevertheless, this divide has weakened in recent times. In France today, around four young people out of ten stay out of the Left–Right bipolarization. In 1978, 56 percent of the 18–30 year olds were on the Left, 22 percent on the Right and 18 percent neither Left nor Right. In 2007, they are respectively 40 percent, 27 percent, and 33 percent, and in 2017, 34 percent, 28 percent, and 38 percent.[3]

[2] In France, see INSEE studies on electoral participation according to age.

[3] Electoral Surveys conducted at the CEVIPOF (Sciences Po/Paris).

While it has become important to base analyses on a more complex array of socialization agents and on changes that have shaped our contemporary democratic political systems, studies in the field confirm the role and weight of family influence over the long term and the early structuring of certain political predispositions (Sears and Levy 2003; Zuckerman, Dasovic, and Fitzgerald 2007). In France, for example, a large majority of people share the same ideological positions as their parents. Only a small minority say they have switched political sides, either from Right to Left or from Left to Right (Muxel 2014, 2015a).[4] For the vast majority of French people, political tradition within the family and the political choices made by their parents remain influential. Two-thirds of them (66 percent) favor continuity with the political choices of their parents (left-wing, right-wing or neither), whereas only a small minority (11 percent) break away and change political sides (Muxel 2018). More or less comparable results are observed in other countries in Europe (Coffé and Voorpostel 2010, Hooghe and Boonen 2015, Avdeenko and Siedler 2017). The tension between this strong ideological structuration that is characteristic of intergenerational political socialization and transmission on one hand, and the individualization of political positions, related amongst other things to greater fluidity in electoral choice on the other hand, necessarily complexify political transmission. While ideological positions seem to be transmitted, this is less the case for electoral choices that now tend to be more autonomous and volatile (Muxel 2015b). Recent electoral sociology in France shows more individualized electoral behaviors and a weakening of dispositional sociological factors in explaining both voting and non-voting. Electoral campaigns, election issues, institutional and social contextual effects, political offer, introduce factors that disrupt the influence of primary family socialization, and have a growing impact on the electoral decision process itself. (Cautres and Muxel 2011). Nevertheless, family still matters. For example, it has been possible to measure a reinforcement of electoral turnout within a given household when members of the same family live together (Buton, Lemercier, and Mariot 2012). Thus, it seems that simply living together, and the sharing and discussion of opinions that entails, continues to encourage family members to vote at election time. In spite of the more individualized relationships to politics, the politicization and the political participation of the individuals are still driven by intimate and family ties.

Not every family has the same capacity to transmit ideas and values, and political socialization may take many different routes. It can be built in opposition and reaction to family ideals, or indeed through references that are not explicitly political. For example, moral values, the everyday education of children, family rules, and prevailing societal issues, etc. However, the family provides the first points of reference or the first lack of reference and, by the same token, plays a decisive role in the formation of subsequent choices. The intensity of affect-based identification in the political socialization process is obvious, especially given how the family has become invested with significance, both normatively and subjectively, in postmodern Western societies. The consistency still at work is probably more affective and emotional than ideological or directly related to partisanship or to the norms of political participation. It is still a determining component of the political identity of individuals, even if contextual factors and biographical effects can emphasize or undermine its impact (Coffé and Voorpostel 2014; Muxel 2015b). Within the family, political and religious convictions are always more likely to be transmitted than a number of other values. And this transmission is all the more effective when the parents' choices are visible and homogeneous (Percheron 1993). Interestingly, mothers play a predominant role (Boonen 2017; Muxel 2015a; Rico and Jennings 2016). The role model that parents provide to their children is effective in strengthening or on the contrary curbing their future chances of political involvement.

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[4] Based on quantitative surveys, an indicator of " political filiation" was consructed from the positioning declared by the respondent with regard to the political positioning, Left, Right, or neither Left nor Right, of his/her father, of his/her mother, and of him/herself.

The role of the family as a prime agent of socialization is not only confirmed by the research based on social learning theories but also by studies that focus on the socioeconomic characteristics of the family and on the social milieu pathway (Dalton 1982; Stolle and Hooghe 2004). The educational environment is also a consistent predictor of political behaviors (Andolina, Jenkins, Zukin, and Keeter 2003). The higher the parents' educational level, the more likely their offspring are to be politically involved. A richer political environment enhances the educational attainments of their offspring that, in turn, also strengthens political participation (Verba, Schlozman, and Burns 2005). Nevertheless, differentiating between specialized and non-specialized, explicit and implicit, political awareness is not an easy task.

The strength of political filiation does not imply that socialization reproduces political identifications identically or that it guarantees the adoption of the same political behavior. Neither does it imply any rigid notion that identities remain stable despite intergenerational transmission. A number of studies have shown the impact of social mobility trajectories on the transmission of political preferences and behaviors. Upward social mobility is more likely than downward trajectories or social reproduction to result in individuals changing or reorganizing their political views (Wernli 2007). The impact of familial socialization can also be affected by individual career trajectories. Workplace socialization may lead to a distancing from the legacies of primary socialization. By way of example, a recent study that included young engineers from right-leaning families shows that a number of them had assimilated more internationally oriented values and visions during their studies and had developed attitudes and opinions that were less conservative than their parents' mostly right-leaning values (Sainsaulieu, Surdez, and Zufferey 2019). Moreover, the conditions of transmission differ, depending on parental and conjugal roles within the family, and the impact of certain relational or emotional parameters can also weigh in. New models of family communication that reverse the roles of parents and children as conventionally understood in political socialization have been established, showing that children and adolescents possess the power to transform patterns of family communication in ways that benefit themselves and their parents (McDevitt and Chaffee 2002). Thus, the socialization process is not only top-down but can also be bottom-up, and reversible from the newer to the older generation, particularly on protest attitudes and behavior that have become obviously more legitimate for the elders.

Many of the individual preferences, commitments, and votes that affect government choice of public policy are shaped, compared, deliberated on, argued about, and settled upon within the family. In this sense, the family may be seen as an experimental terrain for the democracy itself. As early as the 1950s, Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues at the Columbia School drew attention to the effect of cross-pressures created by conflicts between individuals and their environment. Individuals facing political divergence from their relatives, showed a decline of interest in politics, a greater volatility in electoral choice, and greater hesitation in making a decision at election time (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet

1968). There is a link between the relatively recent redistribution and redefinition of gender, family, and conjugal roles and profound changes in the democratic ideal (Giddens 1992). Thus, divergences and differences of opinion are part of family life and have consequences both for what is transmitted and how that happens. Having carried out a survey specifically dedicated to understanding affective interactions about politics within the circle of close relatives, in my recent work on this topic I identified a number of social, psycho-affective, and political drivers of "politicization through intimacy" taking place within interpersonal and private relationships, particularly within couples and partners, that have an impact on political participation (Muxel 2014, 2015b). Gender also has a significant effect, women tending to be less likely to discuss politics outside of the family and close circle than men. Consequently, their private circle is likely to play a much more significant role in their relationship to politics and to political participation (Muxel 2015a).

Renewed Interest and New Opportunities for Research

As Kent Jennings noted (2007: 29) in his review on political socialization: "It would be a mistake, though, to say that an interest in political socialization disappeared for any great length of time." However, future research might follow a number of different directions. These new research avenues also have the potential to breathe new life into studies of political participation in an approach specifically based on socialization. Having a specific understanding and knowledge of politics is only one aspect of what motivates individuals to make choices, express themselves, or take action in political situations. While there is undoubtedly a need to continue working on early acquisition of knowledge about politics and its impact on citizen involvement, there is also a need to broaden the overall issue of political socialization and to question it from other research perspectives. At the end of the chapter just mentioned, Kent Jennings suggests that socialization processes represent "a unique opportunity to analyse the resocialization of adults" (p. 39). Clearly, this question is likely to reinforce the vitality of and interest in this field of research.

Before finishing this chapter, two further research questions that are particularly important for a better understanding of the mechanisms of political participation should be mentioned.

The first of these is a broadening of the perimeters that delineate the vectors and places that play a role in the socialization or individuals. Socialization can be understood as the acquisition of knowledge about different types of practices, not necessarily strictly political, but connected to social or professional experiences, gender status, ethnic and cultural attributes, religious beliefs, etc. As a corollary to this, individual involvement will also vary considerably. Types of involvement include non-specialized and intermittent practices (for example, those of ordinary citizens who are not very well informed when they vote, discuss political subjects, or participate in politically oriented collective acts); committed practices (partisan, trade union, or associative militancy); specialized or professionalized practices such as those of agents who are involved in the political field in the strict sense (political leaders); in the fields of public policy (civil servants, central or peripheral administrations, representatives of interest groups, experts); or people connected at different political levels (journalists, communication advisers, opinion poll specialists, intellectuals, opinion leaders, etc.). One particularly interesting research question warrants discussion within this framework: do these socialization processes that relate to the different areas and are operated by different agents (as already outlined) have points in common or, on the contrary, are they necessarily different (Gaxie 2002)?

There is also a need to deeply explore the complex interactions represented by social networks and internet. The importance of their role in structuring opinions, influencing public opinion, and defining the modes of political expression and action are increasingly evident.

The second research question that should be stressed is the affective dimension of socialization. Its importance during the initial understanding of the political sphere has long been established. However, there is a need for an in-depth and systematic exploration of how this affect develops in adult life. Affective processes are expressed on several emotional levels, including the most negative ones. They take on particular significance in cases of contradictory identifications or conflicts in socialization that an individual may be confronted with. A better understanding of the connections between primary and secondary processes of socialization remains a challenge for research in this field of study. Although the school plays a decisive educational part, its role in political socialization remains difficult to apprehend and the conclusions of research in this area are often divergent (Niemi and Junn 1998; Galston 2001; Torney-Purta 2002; Resh and Sabbagh 2014; Mayne and Hakhverdian 2017).

Political discussions also constitute a fascinating field of study to grasp the role of otherness in the process of socialization. They provide the occasion for confrontation and deliberation to take place, thus contributing to the orientation of both choice and behavior (2005). By confirming mutual agreement or welcoming controversy, they provide an experience of politics, a kind of "dress rehearsal" for deliberations that occur in the public sphere (Mutz 2002; Gerber 2012; Conover, Searing, and Crewe 2002). It has been shown that the intensity of informal conversations about politics in everyday and ordinary networks depends on how long democracy has been in place in the countries in question (Ikeda, Morales, and Wolf 2010; Schmitt-Beck and Lup 2013). Although the involvement of these exchanges in the process of political socialization is a recognized phenomenon, and although they clearly influence many judgments and opinions, the degree of this influence is difficult to identify. The results of existing research in this field are often ambivalent, and sometimes conflicting. Much research has clearly demonstrated the influence of demographic and socioeconomic factors on the frequency of political discussions (Eliasoph 1998; Pattie and Johnson 1999). Other research has shown the role of strictly political factors such as partisan identification, the degree of interest in politics, or the level of knowledge (Conover, Searing, and Crewe 2002). Moreover, a substantial amount of research has examined how political homogeneity (versus heterogeneity) in the individual's interpersonal and affective networks affects the conditions of politicization and political participation. However, this research has not led to definitive conclusions. It also remains difficult to make any definitive statement about the impact of diverging opinions. Some researchers believe that they reinforce the cognitive capacities and knowledge of individuals, whereas others see them as a hindrance to political participation. Others still assert that they have no proven influence (Huckfeldt 2007). Certain studies even state that opinions, formed in the context of exchanges and interactions, belong less to those who form them, and more to the networks within which they take shape. This invites us to consider the plurality of opinions held by individuals, as well as how these opinions are modified depending on the discussion groups within which they develop (Ferrand 2011). Infra-political processes, affects, and emotions that are driven by these interactions play a significant role in the transmission of ideological choices and in the conditions under which ordinary citizens become politically involved.

In recent times, the great political narratives of the past have faded and no longer provide a readable map of systems of belonging to which individuals can attach themselves. Members of most adult age groups today began formulating their views in a world where ideological labels, the division between the Left and Right, partisan affiliations, and the definition of competing international power blocks were all well established. However, for younger generations, the context has changed enormously: they form their political views without drawing on clearly established reference points in an age where new political cleavages have clearly emerged (Dalton 2007). In a context of a downward trend in trust in democratic political institutions and citizens' expectations of them (Mounk 2018; Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018), being active and participatory citizens supposes a broadening of the forms of political action, conventional and unconvential, as well as a revival of democracy itself. Political socialization is still—and may be more than ever—a decisive key of the process.

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CHAPTER 41

MOBILIZATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

AENGUS BRIDGMAN AND DIETLIND STOLLE

THE 2020s have started with a political bang. Tens of thousands of protestors marched repeatedly in Belarus to demand the resignation of President Alexander Lukashenko despite a brutal crackdown. In January 2021, Trump supporters rioted and forced entry into the House of Representatives. Anti-lockdown protests against quarantine measures designed to limit the spread of COVID-19 were rampant throughout the world. And hundreds of millions cast ballots in local, regional, and national elections. These diverse political actions were taken by individuals mobilized in a variety of ways. Examining the arenas and processes by which people came to participate politically is central to understanding politics more broadly.

There are clearly different perspectives on political mobilization. Downs (1957) offered an early theorization of the irrationality of participating in elections as a single ballot cast is unlikely to make a difference. Olson (1965) built on this to argue that people are not likely to contribute time, money, or effort to public goods without other incentives. Brady, Schlozman, and Verba (1999) moved beyond these rational choice perspectives to add that people need time and resources such as money to participate in politics (see also Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). They also highlighted how participation is a social act—people often participate in politics simply because they are asked to do so.

Social networks, whether they are found in formal associations or in informal networks of friends, neighbors, or work colleagues, or those of the digital type such as social media provide opportunities for people to be recruited and mobilized to participate in political activism (Teorell 2003). Social networks are also an important source of political information, civic skills, socialization of collective values and more (Granovetter 1973; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Klofstad 2007; Jang 2009). While politics does not play a central role in most people's everyday conversations, the people with whom we communicate regularly help inform our political orientations, values, and political behaviors (Eliasoph 1998). Of course, social networks do not just have mobilizing effects and they can also exert social pressures that might contribute to refraining from participation. We explore these different roles here.

In doing so, this chapter provides an assessment of the current state of research on political mobilization in three important social arenas: voluntary associations, informal social networks, and digital networks. We elaborate several processes that link these social arenas to political participation, including learning cooperative values and civic skills, acquiring political knowledge, developing trust, and forming social identity, accountability, and social pressure. We focus on literature examining institutional forms of participation such as voting or donating to campaigns and non-institutionalized forms such as protests and boycotts. However, we also highlight other expressive forms of participation such as writing political comments in digital networks. This chapter seeks to provide patterns of existing research and the state of the discipline in studying how these three social arenas impact political mobilization and ultimately political participation.

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

Voluntary associations have been seen as some of the most important drivers of political mobilization over the last decades (Maccoby 1958; Almond and Verba 1963; Olsen 1972; Rogers, Bultena, and Barb 1975; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; Hanks and Eckland 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Putnam 2000). We have identified here the most important linking mechanisms that have been studied in this area, building on the work by Guigni and Grasso 2020: 1) the attitudinal socialization in groups, including learning how to trust, cooperate, and solve collection action problems; 2) recruitment into political action by other association members, the group, or political activists external to the group; and 3) the learning of tangible civic skills and political efficacy, and their potential utilization in politics outside of the group setting[1]. We briefly discuss each of these processes in turn.

First, memberships in voluntary associations are thought to foster norms of trust and reciprocity (Putnam 1993). Associations teach how to cooperate and to reach out for one another and they transmit a sense of civic duty and responsibility towards society, which are resources that spur political participation (Curtis, Grabb, and Baer 1992). Although Putnam does not value voluntary groups for their ability to politically mobilize, he claims that horizontally structured face-to-face groups are particularly good at the socialization of a civic spirit and overall engagement (1993; Paxton 2007). There was also an assumption—equally true for online and offline social networks—that bridging associations that bring people together from various walks of life and different backgrounds are better in socializing these values than bonding or homogenous associations that bring people together who are much alike (Putnam 2000).

There have been several theoretical and empirical difficulties in testing these assumptions, however. The question has always remained as to how the cooperation and trust one likely learns within these groups travel to the world outside of the group setting. Furthermore, the claims were also difficult to test because classic survey research was unable to collect enough information about what is happening in voluntary associations in which respondents were members. Such information seems essential as not all "bowling leagues" are alike (Stolle and Rochon 1998). Indeed, careful causal analysis on how voluntary associations nurture these civic values and norms using designs with multiple groups across countries and dynamic variables such as the length of associational membership, panel studies, or distinctions between bridging and less bridging associations revealed that voluntary associations are not so much the *producers* of these values but rather contribute to maintaining them through group life (Stolle 1998; Van Ingen and Van der Meer 2016). People who join voluntary associations, especially those who join diverse groups have been found to already possess these values. There are other understudied factors such as personality traits or other psychological resources that contribute to both membership in voluntary associations and to generalized trust, cooperation, and ultimately mobilization.

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[1] Guigni and Grasso (2020) distinguish four theories: the social capital model, the group consciousness model, the civic voluntarism model, and the mobilization model.

A second mobilizational process focuses on recruitment, which relies on mobilization theory (Rogers, Bultena, and Barb 1975; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993). The general idea here is that membership in voluntary associations opens access to other networks and weak ties and thus to more possibilities of direct recruitment (Granovetter 1973). Scholars believe that membership in voluntary associations provides non-redundant information and related calls to participate in public life. But how do non-political organizations politicize some of its members? We know that organization members report higher political participation when they belong to organizations with more political discussion (Rogers, Bultena, and Barb 1975). Some of the most insightful strategies here relate to studying groups in depth. For example, Erickson and Nosanchuk (1990) showed that being a member of a Bridge club can bring participants into contact with politically active friends with whom players discuss political issues, which is related to discussing politics outside the Bridge Club. Teorell (2003) goes a step further and argues that members of voluntary associations gain more weak ties, especially when joining multiple associations. These ties lead to a wider scope of solicitations for political action just for the sheer size of the network and for the broader diversity within (Teorell 2003: 52; see also Liu et al. 1998). Teorell's study shows that people in multiple associations were asked more to participate in politics.

Yet Rosenstone and Hansen (1993) have pointed out that associations allow not only for the spread of information and diversity in recruitment channels but also for the direct influence of political activists who nudge association members into political mobilization. Indeed, canvassing studies support the idea that being asked to do something politically can have powerful effects, at least on voter turnout (Green, Gerber, and Nickerson 2003) McAdam and Paulsen (1993) also discuss how civil rights movements and specifically the Freedom Summer Mississippi project were nurtured through recruitment by volunteers in voluntary associations, mostly from groups that share common interests. An important part in the recruitment for visible forms of participation such as protests seems to be based on interactions in groups that likely reinforce commitment to a cause, or even a personal identity (Campbell 2009). This mechanism also seems to be reflected in digital networks (see section entitled "Digital Networks").

In this context, Guigni and Grasso talk about the separate process of the building of group consciousness that helps to mobilize members into participation (2020). This mechanism seems particularly useful for minorities or marginalized groups, where awareness of discrimination, for example, exerts empowering resources to organize and raise voices. Recruitment that uses group consciousness-building is also important for theories of social movements and protest behavior, which show that being asked and reminded of one's social identity allows people to be included and nudged into social movements and protest activities (Walgrave and Wouters 2014; Giugni and Grasso 2020). The idea is confirmed, for example, in a study by Lim (2008) who compared the effectiveness of various social influences on the recruitment to protest. In this study, associational ties were twice as likely to succeed in recruiting a protest participant compared to a mere acquaintance trying to recruit. Thus, these weak tie relations originating in the context of voluntary associations seem to be an important part of the puzzle.

Finally, there is a belief that members of voluntary associations learn civic skills and political efficacy (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Putnam 2000; Teorell 2003; Walker 2008). Such skills might entail the learning of giving speeches, writing letters to officials, organizational skills, developing an interest in the organization, establishing relations with the government on behalf of the group, etc. These processes teach the members of groups skills that are transportable to the outside world and that political action pays off. Churches and unions, across a variety of contexts, have repeatedly been shown to teach civic skills and political efficacy (Cnaan and Curtis 2013; Turner, Ryan, and O'Sullivan 2020).

The argument for political efficacy is built on the democratic spillover thesis about the role of workplace democracy. According to this view, learning democracy at the workplace increases workers' sense of political efficacy which is transferable to experiences outside the workplace (Pateman 1970). While this work is mostly focused on unions, the ideas apply to associations more generally as well. In essence, even workers at the shop-floor level learn about democratic participation in unions and that their say influences firm-level outcomes. Particularly the experience of contestation and political negotiation as it is experienced in union-level bargaining gives a good sense of one's own voice and abilities to influence firm-level decisions—this sense of efficacy travels to outside union experiences (Turner, Ryan, and O'Sullivan 2020). The results of a cross-national study on the mobilizational effect of union membership shows that union members are indeed more participatory and efficacious, and this is true particularly in institutional contexts of low union density (D'Art and Turner 2007). Countries with high union density are thought to have experienced a successful spillover effect from union membership to the entire population (ibid). However, the relationship declines across young generations, suggesting that the socializational power of unions was stronger at times when they were seen as equal bargaining partners (Turner, Ryan, and O'Sullivan 2020).

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady show that civic skills are learned in various arenas, particularly at the workplace, but also outside of unions, in associational life, and in church (1995), at least in the US context. They examine their data in a way to get more at the causal role of churches particularly for Afro-Americans. Usually, they find a discrepancy in civic skills between people in low- and high-status jobs, with the latter having many more opportunities to learn civic skills than the former. However, when looking at church involvement they see that Afro-Americans in low status jobs do not learn many civic skills at their jobs, instead they learn them in churches. Thus, low-status Afro-Americans, who join churches, have nearly as many civic skills as Afro-Americans in high-status jobs, thus deepening our understanding that there is a causal role for churches, particularly regarding racial minorities. The institutions that enable the learning of civic skills, such as the churches of Afro-Americans, are often horizontally structured. That point is important and confirmed by a three-denominational study in Indonesia, where mosques, particularly those with a hierarchical structure, offered fewer opportunities to practice civic skills than some of the churches (Lussier 2019). Again, as Kim, Nie, and Verba (1978) have already shown, horizontal organizations such as some churches or other religious groups seem to work as equalizers in our societies.

In sum, the theoretical link between voluntary associations and political action is extremely strong. Important theorists and thinkers have spent time and resources to develop ideas about why voluntary associations matter so much for the political and civic spirit (Rosenblum 1998). Yet empirical research still struggles to confirm the *causal* role of associations in all regards. For example, it seems that generalized trust might not be created in those groups. But there are indications that civic skills and efficacy can be boosted by voluntary group membership. The verdict is still uncertain about how voluntary associations expand weak ties and whether these weak ties shape politics or the ability to cooperate. The problem with the research is that it is often correlational—the overall results clearly show that association members are more politicized, but we do not know whether people learned politicization in their groups or whether they were already more politicized when they entered voluntary associations. This issue of endogeneity and spuriousness has been addressed in some studies and the actual findings are more modest than the theoretical ideas about voluntary associations lead us to believe. Thus, we agree with Van Ingen and Van der Meer (2016) that the evidence does not allow us to conclude that associations are *creators* of engagement and civic spirit per se, but that they are pools of democracy where the participatory spirit is nourished and potentially maintained.

We add two more caveats to our discussion. First, the benefits of associations might be collective in nature. That is, people who live, for example, in areas with dense associational networks might benefit from a higher connectedness without being members themselves. The processes of transmission to political action would be more indirect through learning or pressures from connected neighbors, for example. This collective benefit of associational life has been discussed with regard to generalized trust, where non-members particularly benefit locally from associations (Born and Fatke 2019). In that sense social capital has become a resource that can be tapped by others beyond those who are part of the generation process.

The second caveat has to do with adolescence and youth, which represent important socialization phases of the so-called "impressionable years." Whereas adult socialization in voluntary associations can only be a modest influence in one's life, the role of youth associations is much more plausible (Hanks 1981). Indeed, longitudinal research designs show that being a member of a youth association in school or beyond generates more political participation later in life (McFarland and Thomas 2006). There is a particular promise that associations make a difference here.

In sum, voluntary associations have received much attention as important arenas for political mobilization. While research on trust, recruitment, and civic skills seems theoretically and correlationally powerful, the challenge is to tease out the causal pathways and arrows in more detail.

Informal Social Ties

Social informal networks are at the heart of political mobilization (Diani 2004). There are two strains of literature and two methodological approaches of how to study informal social networks that come together here as in some of the other mobilization spheres discussed in this chapter. On the one hand, the political behavior literature has talked about the importance of everyday life networks outside of voluntary associations and it includes ties such as friendships, neighbors, or colleagues from work, and even fleeting encounters at bus stops or doctors' offices (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Brady, Schlozman, and Verba 1999). On the other hand, social movement scholars, have also highlighted the importance of personal networks for bringing people into movements or protests (McAdam 1986; Giugni and Grasso 2020). The empirical research on these two approaches can be undertaken in two different ways: on the one hand, individual-level survey research or interview research documents the level, or which characteristics of these social networks matter for political mobilization. On the other hand, a thorough network analysis of geographically or institutionally finite social ties can reveal how mobilization moves through an existing social network, for example select locations, dormitories, or online groups (see next section).

Many of the mechanisms identified in the study of voluntary associations as a mobilizational sphere come into play here as well. Particularly, informal ties can provide a community of like-minded folks, create political consciousness, and collective identity, and results in efficacy that brings people closer to their political goals (Passy 2003). In addition, informal social networks can lead to incidental political exposure and transmission of political information, which propels people into action (ibid). At the same time, some types of social networks have also been found to demobilize people away from political participation.

Studying the power of social networks for political mobilization is no easy undertaking, particularly because social networks are so vast and there are no real network boundaries. This problem is also critical in the study of digital networks (see next section). The problem regarding the causal role of networks is also difficult to pin down. As informal social interactions are mostly (though not always) selective, particular attention must be paid to the causal flow of network effects.

Many of the important studies about the role of informal social ties were conducted by using semi-experimental methods, for example with the random assignment of college roommates. For example, Klofstad (2011) finds that college students, who reported more political discussion with their roommates, were also more likely to participate in civic clubs and to vote; however, these outcomes were based on self-reports (see critique in Campbell 2009). Nickerson (2009) was able to push this research further to pin down the causal story. He finds that living with someone who frequently discusses politics leads college students to engage in more political talk. In this way, having a college roommate worked very much like talking to a Bridge club member—that is, in settings of formal organizations and informal ties, people get to talk about politics, because their fellow group or network members have these interests. Mobilization occurs here through incidental exposure in our social surroundings. And incidental exposure has been an important tool for showing that network exposure matters.

Much of the research on the mobilizational role of social ties relies on distinguishing their different characteristics, such as strong from weak (Granovetter 1973), as well as homogeneous from heterogeneous ties (denoted as bonding and bridging ties in Putnam 2000). While there has been a lot of hope that weak bridging ties might be most beneficial for trust, the reduction of prejudice and the learning of collective values, it is really the research on informal strong friendship and bridging ties as mobilizational arenas that has received most attention. Particularly the composition of friendship networks regarding *political disagreement* have played an important role in the discussion of political demobilization.

The research on political disagreement starts from the principle of homophily, or the tendency of people to surround themselves with people like them (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001). However, we do not really choose or do not always have the luxury to choose our social networks based on political agreement (although see Fowler, Baker, and Dawes 2008 on assortative mating in politics). Thus, political disagreement in friendships, family ties, or in other social ties is generally a common feature of social networks that has been studied well in the literature on political mobilization and demobilization. There is consistent evidence that people perceive some political disagreement within their social networks, and that such perceived diversity is more likely among weaker ties, for example at work where individuals have even less choice in selecting their associates (Huckfeldt et al. 2004; Mutz and Mondak 2006), or in strong ties where there is little choice (such as family ties).

There are contradictory expectations and findings as to the political consequences of political disagreement in social networks. Based on theories of deliberative democracy and social capital, the assumption is that political diversity might have positive effects on the creation of civic values and behavior (Fishkin 1995; Putnam 2000). The point is that politically diverse networks are more likely to expose people to new information (Granovetter 1973; Coleman 1988), and create greater awareness of rationales for opposing views (Huckfeldt et al. 2004; McClurg 2006a; Mutz 2002a). In other words, these diverse social networks may provide citizens with valuable resources—political information and understanding of the opposing political side—and are similarly believed to have mobilizing effects on their political participation (Knoke 1990; Leighley 1990; Pattie and Johnston 2009).

In contrast, other research has shown that political disagreement in social networks may inhibit political participation, especially mainstream, electoral participation (Mutz 2002a; Mutz and Mondak 2006; Jang 2009). This phenomenon has been referred to as a democratic dilemma (Mutz 2002b; Pattie and Johnston 2009). Several causal mechanisms have been discussed in this context. One is social accountability, that is people's desire to avoid interpersonal conflict tends to have a direct, negative impact on participation (Ulbig and Funk 1999). A second possibility is that exposure to political disagreement, by increasing the ability to see things from other people's perspectives, also arguably creates less intense, more ambivalent attitudes. It is this kind of political ambivalence that has been found to inhibit political engagement. In other words, political disagreement in certain social settings creates ambivalence and social pressures of accountability that might hurt, limit, or silence certain forms of political participation.

This important debate has been reviewed and tested in many contexts, and several qualifications must be added. Most importantly, demobilization does not occur among the highly knowledgeable (McClurg 2006b), and when the network contains both political heterogeneity and homogeneity (Nir 2011; Bello 2012), or depends on the level of intimacy or network strength, with demobilization occurring mostly in diverse ties that are very strong or intimate (Ladini, Mancosu, and Vezzoni 2020). Finally, Harell, Stolle, and Quintelier (2019) show that politically diverse ties mobilize instead of demobilize for individualized forms of political action of young people.

A second important debate here concerns the importance of homogeneous or bonding ties which are questioned in their ability to stir political interest beyond the group (Uslaner and Conley 2003). However, in certain contexts, similarity can breed political action. For example, religious attendance means forming informal social networks with similarly minded church friends, who can recruit others to be active in politics. Campbell attributes this power to recruitments from religious groups to the "moral weight" resulting from friendships in religious communities (Campbell 2013). Similarly, ethnic social networks can mobilize political participation (Miller et al. 1981). Members of minority groups turn out at higher rates when experiencing a higher level of group consciousness which can be formed in informal networks with similar others. Research on migration and settlement has typically focused on strong bonding ties and specifically the role of co-ethnic communities in helping newcomers to find not only employment, a place to live, and even emotional support (Portes 1998); however, when it comes to political incorporation of newcomers in the host society, co-ethnic ties have their limits (Kim 2017). Diverse social networks that link immigrant communities to native-born nationals seem to be most beneficial for civic participation in host country politics (ibid).

In sum, the mobilizational power of informal social networks such as friendships, colleagues, neighbors etc. has also been captured by some of the same mechanisms as for voluntary associations: information transmission, incidental political exposure, and creation of collective identity. However, much of the discussion here has focused on the composition and the intensity of the ties. While social networks with political disagreement might politically mobilize, some researchers have shown that they can inhibit political participation because of cross-pressures. Such mixed effects have also been found for strong bonding ties.

Digital Networks

While in-person voluntary associations, and social ties continue to be relevant mobilization spheres for people's engagement in politics, the past two decades have seen a dramatic shift towards digital politics (Chadwick 2020; Persily and Tucker 2020). For millions of individuals, particularly young people, the primary way to connect with others and share or discuss information is now on social media.

How their buzz of activity matters for politics and particularly for broader patterns of mobilization is an active and thriving area of inquiry. However, a persistent challenge in studying the political consequences of digital networks is that they are—much like voluntary associations or other physical social networks—often not exclusively or even primarily based upon political discussions. Joining digital networks is mostly motivated by existing social ties or entertainment and recreation interests. A brief tour of some of the largest digital networks is instructive. Facebook emerged as a method for college students to socialize online. Twitter began as a text-based status sharing service. YouTube as a video uploading site. Pinterest and Instagram emerged as creative platforms for sharing images. LinkedIn as a resume and job search site. Tik Tok, its precursors Vine and Music.ly, and Snapchat were/are creative platforms focused on short videos. WhatsApp and WeChat began as simple messaging apps. Reddit as a science, programming, and adult content website. None of these communities began with the explicit intention to create a space for people to share political news, discuss/debate politics, and/or potentially become politically mobilized. Indeed, even today, the majority of users on these platforms do not engage in politics (Guess, Nagler, and Tucker 2019). Nevertheless, there is extensive documentation of individuals in these networks becoming implicated in politics, and, moreover, social media platforms themselves are now central to contemporary politics.

Early writings on digital networks expressed a profound hope that online networks would lead to broader and more inclusive forms of political participation (Ward, Gibson, and Lusoli 2003). The question we address here is whether this anticipated mobilization effect has actually occurred in digital networks. By singling out digital from other types of social networks, we continue the tradition of conceptualizing online and offline as distinct spheres of political mobilization (Lilleker and Koc-Michalska 2017). The most frequently studied outcomes of digitally networked participation include protests (Macafee and De Simone 2012; Tufekci and Wilson 2012; Breuer, Landman, and Farquhar 2015; Tufekci 2017) and voting (Biswas, Ingle, and Roy 2014).

However, prior to delving into the research, a cautionary methodological note. Understanding the mobilizing effects of digital networks demands causal evidence, but the vast bulk of research employs surveys that use self-reported behaviors (see Boulianne 2020 for a meta-analysis of over 300 such survey-based studies). These responses tend to be somewhat incongruous with actual political behaviors (Dahlgaard et al. 2019). Moreover, while there are strong correlations between aggregate self-reported and behavioral measures of social media use, there are substantial and hard-to-predict discrepancies at the individual level (Guess et al. 2019; Barthel et al. 2020). The wealth of survey research thus provides insights into the relationship between digital networks and political participation, but cannot clearly identify causal processes at play.

However, some work on digital networks attempts to untangle causal effects more closely. More specifically, we identify five ways in which researchers have tried to better understand overall how digital networks mobilize: 1) through tracking the same users over time through repeated surveying or longitudinal examinations of digital trace data (the panel approach, for example Vissers and Stolle 2014); 2) linking self-reported and actual behavior through collecting both survey responses and digital trace data (see Vaccari et al. 2015 for an early innovation); 3) ethnographic and interview methods that allow researchers to understand journeys to political mobilization through digital networks (e.g. Bonilla and Rosa 2015); 4) survey or lab-based experiments that search for psychological processes underpinning mobilization effects (e.g. Vissers et al. 2012); and 5) through experimental manipulations on social media platforms (the field experiment approach, for example Bond et al. 2012; Coppock, Guess, and Ternovski 2016; Bail et al. 2018). Despite these innovations, work in this area faces persistent limitations around selection bias, construct validity, and measurement error, especially regarding the full range of digital network engagement, both internal and external validity depending on the research design, and a broad range of unobservable confounders such as digital network usage patterns, membership in other networks, and strength of ties to other individuals in digital networks. The major barrier to decisive identification of causal effects continues to be data access: researchers can only compile patchwork and incomplete individual—and aggregate-level data from even the large public digital networks. An individual simply cannot be effectively traced in their digital habits across networks (but see Barthel et al. 2020 for a well-resourced attempt) which limits the ability to really understand the collective causal impact of digitally networked participation.

Given these methodological caveats, we focus here on the extent to which the scholarship has been able to identify (sometimes causal) relationships between digital networks and political participation. Two decades of research on these connections has yielded a very persistent finding: use of digital media is associated with greater civic and political participation

(Boulianne 2020). Political learning was initially thought as the principal pathway by which those in online social networks could become politically mobilized, and is more broadly seen as a key ingredient for many forms of political participation (Verba and Nie 1972). The underlying idea has been that active digital network effects start with political information-seeking, lead to broader increase of political knowledge and internal efficacy, and result in greater political participation (Andersen et al. 2016).

However, there has been only limited empirical evidence of this process for wider political knowledge (e.g. Valenzuela et al. 2019). Increased information availability seems to have led, not to higher levels of knowledge, but instead to greater selective information seeking behavior which can widen political knowledge differences despite better access to information (Prior 2007). However, there are simultaneously repeated findings that digital networks provide political information and knowledge that facilitate large-scale offline political action (Tufekci and Wilson 2012; Reuter and Szakonyi 2015; Enikolopov, Makarin, and Petrova 2020). Here, the discrepancy between specific and general political knowledge can be explained in part by the difference between the systematic/habitual political participation that is of interest to scholars and to instances of single-issue mobilization.

An alternative pathway through which political learning may occur, particularly in digital networks, is through incidental exposure. Individuals may encounter a range of political messages in their digital networks, much like in voluntary associations or social networks in the offline world. This incidental exposure might unleash increased political interest and engagement (Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017). This proposed mechanism operates similarly to offline networks where increased network heterogeneity and a larger number of weak ties can facilitate an incidental learning process (Lee and Kim 2017). Incidental exposure is more frequently observed in youth and those with low political interest (Fletcher and Nielsen 2018). Another possible consequence of incidental exposure work through agenda-setting effects, which arise by highlighting issue salience, particularly for those who have low political interest and little direct political news consumption (Feezell 2018).

When individuals believe that digital networking sites provide them with the political information they require (i.e., that relevant news will find them), they are less likely to seek out news and thus, have reduced general political knowledge (Gil de Zúñiga, Weeks, and Ardèvol-Abreu 2017). Another observed dynamic (sometimes called *tune-in, tune-out)* is that online political information in these networks is sporadic as compared to more traditional forms of information seeking (Ekström and Shehata 2018). This inattentiveness to political information on digital networks appears to limit the true acquisition of political knowledge or mobilization effects (Dimitrova et al. 2014). On balance, research on political learning in digital networks suggests that knowledge can be enhanced but the effects are limited by the sporadic nature of information-seeking in online networks (Boukes 2019).

Given weak informational effects, the role of socialization, social identity construction, social commitments, and peer effects have been highlighted as an alternate pathway to mobilization. The less distinct boundaries between non-political and political spheres online provide ample opportunities for (nonpolitical) social interactions in digital networks to prompt political action. For example, Feezell, Wagner, and Conroy (2021) find that socially driven information consumption patterns (e.g. algorithmically determined information feeds based on social networks) are notably associated with increased online political mobilization. Consuming socially driven algorithmic news, they argue, produces stronger socialization effects through a distinct form of packaging where each piece of information is imbued with a "social message" (e.g., agreement/conflict in a network) in addition to the "information message." These results are intriguing but again, based on self-reports in surveys.

Social identity formation provides a powerful bridge between being active in online digital networks and offline participation. In a study of protest behavior in Venezuela during the *Toma de Caracas* ("taking of Caracas"), Eubank and Kronick (2020) find that when your networks are able to follow your actual political participation, there are social sanctioning effects that induce greater participation during key political moments. More generally, and building on the social identity model of collective action, Thomas et al. (2020) argue that identity temporally precedes collective action. This extends earlier work arguing that people will engage in collective action to advance the interests of groups they identify with (Tajfel 2010). Digital networks reinforce and produce shared identities, even where there are weak barriers to entry (Mikal et al. 2016). Signaling membership in a community, particularly through online expression, can thus lead to increased political participation and activism (Valenzuela 2013).

Another social pathway is the role that peers, and "influencers" can have in mobilizing digitally networked communities. A range of experimental interventions have shown how individuals in digital networked communities are able to prompt behavioral change (at least online) among members. Eckles, Kizilic, and Basky (2016), for example, show that peer encouragement and feedback on Facebook can lead to more expressive political speech online. These effects appear to be particularly pronounced when coming from high-status individuals (e.g., Munger 2017, 2020).

A third important argument for the mobilizational role of digital networks focuses on their ability to lower coordination costs between like-minded individuals, which can prompt collective action. Cell phone use and digital networks are now intimately linked with large-scale protest organizations as well get-out-the-vote initiatives and community organizing. Digital networks also allow the rapid dissemination of government response to political activity which can prompt greater collective action, especially in cases of violent repression (Christensen and Garfias 2018). There are numerous documented cases of digital networks being instrumental in widespread mobilization. Examples include Egypt's Tahrir Square protests in 2011 (Tufekci and Wilson 2012), the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement in 2014 (Abramson, So, and Leung 2015), and the international youth protests on climate change (Boulianne, Lalancette, and Ilkiw 2020).

Overall, there is strong evidence for complementary/reinforcing mobilization dynamics from digital networks to political participation. While there are limited causal findings demonstrating learning or information effects, socialization effects appear to be stronger.

However, some scholarship suggests that participating in digital networks may actively lead to less embodied political participation; engaging with digital networks has become the primary and sometimes exclusive realm of political activity for some populations. That is, their political action is embedded in their social network activity. This behavior (e.g., liking a political message online) appears conceptually and empirically different from more conventional, institutional, and even what has often been called non-institutionalized forms of political participation (Gibson and Cantijoch 2013; Hersh 2020). Engaging in politics primarily through digital networks appears to be particularly attractive for younger and less prosperous individuals who may opt out of more traditional or other participation avenues (Theocharis, Moor, and Deth 2019). This account is corroborated by Feezell (2016) who finds that resource-based characteristics of those who participate in offline politics do not powerfully predict engagement in digital networks.

In an innovative experimental study, Theocharis and Lowe (2016) randomly assigned Greek youth to activate a Facebook profile for six months and measured their online and offline political participation. They find small negative effects and speculate that social media platforms may distract the users' attention from politics. Another similar demobilizing mechanism is established by Schumann and Klein (2015) who find that low-threshold online action leads to decreased offline political activity due to a misplaced sense of political accomplishment. Hersh (2020) similarly argues that those who engage in political hobbyism (which includes consuming political news and engaging in low-impact online activities) are effectively substituting genuine political activity for ongoing digital network use.

Digital networks clearly have an instrumental role in mobilizing large-scale protests, but little research has been able to causally demonstrate a strong aggregate-level link between digital social networks and other forms of offline political action outside of protests. Indeed, there is some evidence, examples of which are described earlier in the chapter, that suggests digital networks reduce embodied participation. When mobilization does occur, political knowledge effects tend to be limited and instead identity formation provides the best explanatory power.

The digital network landscape is rapidly changing as are the methods used to understand how they impact political behavior. Much of this research has been conducted on Twitter and Facebook and there are indications that structural features of social networks are important for understanding the role they play in politically mobilizing individuals (e.g., the algorithm for information feeds, the extent to which the digital networks reproduce embodied ones, etc., see Feezell, Wagner and Conroy 2021). Finally, while the bulk of this research has focused on a causal pathway that flows from digital network use towards political participation; Boulianne and Theocharis (2020) argue that the process may actually be the reverse, where political participation as a result of other processes (for example, through existing offline networks) leads individuals into digital networks This theorizing supports the idea that prior political commitments continue to be the primary drivers, even as digital networks emerge as a core site of political contention.

Future Research

This chapter has examined the extent to which voluntary associations, informal social ties, and digital networks can politically mobilize. Our goal was to bring multiple perspectives and evidence to understanding the various spheres and processes involved in the mobilization process. Table 41.1 highlights the main processes discussed in the chapter, grouped into several sub-themes and with a checkmark for the (de)mobilizational sphere where each was applied. The checkmarks do not indicate that a causal relationship has been proven but rather that a given process has been theoretically and empirically examined in the literature.

Survey research has formed the bedrock of much of the theorizing and empirical testing around the mobilization spheres discussed here. Hundreds of surveys, including many with panel components, have been conducted that track correlations between individual-level characteristics, social networks, and various forms of political participation. These surveys

Table 41.1 Processes across Mobilization Spheres

Processes	Voluntary Associations	Informal Social Ties	Digital Networks
Mobilization Processes			
Attitudes and skill development			
Learning to trust, cooperate, and solve collective action problems	✓		
Learning civic skills and political efficacy	✓		
Political information effects			
Political information-seeking and learning	✓	✓	✓
Incidental exposure to political information	✓	✓	✓
Social Mechanisms			
Recruitment into politics by ties	✓	✓	✓
Identity formation	✓	✓	✓
Coordination Costs			
Lowered political coordination costs			✓
Demobilization Processes			
Distraction, hobbyism, or misplaced sense of political accomplishment			✓
Network composition (social accountability and ambiguity)		✓	

offer only marginal utility when conducted on the same types of (overwhelmingly Western) populations. This is true for both embodied and digital networks. For networks such as voluntary associations and informal social ties we observe an enormous theoretical literature pointing to their importance for political mobilization. Yet when it comes to showing their causal role, evidence remains scarce. The same can be said for digital networks.

Scholars should focus on using creative quantitative or systematic qualitative or mixed approaches that seek to understand specific ways in which mobilization has occurred in particular communities, during selected events or campaigns, and at specific moments in time. The type of research preferred by political behavioralists consistently produces causally inconclusive findings, while more ethnographic, qualitative, or targeted quantitative approaches of studying one or a few networks or associations potentially over time is more promising for disentangling the true influence of social spheres. Such approaches help to observe mobilization and demobilization processes from within social networks. Researchers can benefit enormously from building ties in these communities to better understand the processes of mobilization. Of course, greater dialogue between these approaches is necessary for the field to advance.

Experimental approaches can help elucidate causal processes, showing that changes within networks can produce mobilization or demobilization. While keeping in mind ethical considerations associated with these types of interventions, there are a variety of innovative and effective approaches available and data collection at scale for digital networks have made this type of research more accessible. Here scholars have been able to use a variety of nudge experiments with the attempt to exogenously induce subsequent mobilization (examples include sending private messages requesting subjects to sign a petition or increasing exposure to cross-partisan messaging, see experiments in Bond et al. 2012; Theocharis and Lowe 2016; Coppock, Guess, and Ternovski 2016; Bail et al. 2018; Munger 2020).

Finally, the detailed mixed findings described in this chapter hide two larger realities. First, the distinction of these three social spheres is increasingly artificial, as political identity, conversation, and action slip in and out of associations, relationships, and digital networks. Second, digital networks now play an instrumental role in nearly all political mobilization processes. As these networks continue to strengthen, this role will only grow, leading to an increasingly tautological line of inquiry around their place in mobilization processes. It will be increasingly difficult, for example, to separate social digital network engagement from political participation within these networks. The lines between social and political action are becoming increasingly blurred.

Of course, these three social spheres are only one aspect of political mobilization. Research has included group grievances, direct political mobilization by parties and media, and most recently has focused on how emotions play a role for political action. Key frontiers in research on mobilization in social spheres (re)consider the ways that identity (Jardina 2019; Thomas et al. 2020; but see Bennett 2012 for claims to the contrary) and emotion (especially anger, see for example Wollebæk et al. 2019; Banks, White, and McKenzie 2019) play a role in mobilization processes.

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CHAPTER 42

INTERSECTIONALITY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

CHRISTINE M. SLAUGHTER AND NADIA E. BROWN

INTERSECTIONALITY calls attention to multiple reinforcing hierarchies and intersections of discrimination that exert unequal influence on the lives of racially oppressed people, with specific attention to gender. In addition, intersectionality's framework has implications and applications for other marginalized groups (Crenshaw 1989; Nash 2019). Intersectionality's impetus is to "stop essentializing differences" across socially constructed groups (Jordan-Zachery 2007: 257). Using an intersectional lens, political scientists have theorized differences in the frequency and substance of political participation which vary by race, gender, and class (Junn 2009; Brown 2014a). Applying an intersectional lens to political participation necessitates examining simultaneously across and within identities to not essentialize differences in access to power (Reingold, Haynie, and Widner 2020). Beyond the United States, feminist scholars make sense of complexity. Across the globe, women's rights vary given their cross-cutting identities that either elevate or depress their status in the social hierarchy.

However, the concept that is now recognized as intersectionality has been a part of Black feminist analysis before Crenshaw's introduction of the term.[1] The Combahee River Collective (1974) adroitly argued that the Civil Rights Movement and the first-wave women's movement failed to address the needs of Black women because of the single-axis approach of each of them to advocacy. Linking Black women's organizing in social movements, Davis (1981) identifies how race, gender, and capitalism divided white women in their support of Black women's universal suffrage. Similarly, Hill Collins (1990) characterizes how the "matrix of domination" exists at the intersection of race, gender, and class to oppress Black women. Furthermore, Black feminist foremothers such as Anna Julia Cooper, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Maria Stewart, and Mary Church Terrell, among others, forcefully articulated that Black women faced a unique form of oppression in the United States because of both racism and sexism (Giddings 1988). Indeed, the connection between intersectionality and Black women's lived experiences with mutually constitutive forms of oppression led some to see intersectionality as a Black feminist home truth (Nash 2011). Intersectionality reflects the invisibility of Black women where "women's issues" focused on white women, and "racism" only directly impacted Black men in the United States.

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[1] Throughout the chapter, we capitalize Black to indicate that we are referencing a racial group of people, and not just a color.

As an analytical tool, intersectionality unearths the overlapping forms of oppression within the political system. Political participation research often neglects the intersection of race, class, and gender (Simien 2005, 2006), with notable exceptions by Black feminist political scientists (Jordan-Zachery 2003; Hancock 2004; Smooth 2006; Brown 2014a). Similarly, an intersectional lens to the political participation of Latinas, and Asian Americans reveals notable cleavages in the behavior of women of color compared to their male counterparts (Lien 1998; Garcia Bedolla, Monforti, and Pantoja 2007). Intersectionality's marginalization has dire consequences, as the lack of an intersectional analysis conceals patterns of engagement that "hide in plain sight." One example of this is the "gender gap" in American politics, which is a "race gap" among women, rather than a gap between the preferences of men and women (Junn 2009, 2017). White feminists have distorted the extent that racial hierarchies condition political engagement, by focusing only on gendered oppression and omitting the influence of whiteness as privilege. Intersectionality situates the power embedded in race, gender, class, sexuality, nationality, and abilities (Zinn and Dill 1996).

In this chapter, we apply an intersectional lens to the study of participation, using the contemporary example of the 2016 United States presidential election. We demonstrate how Black and Latina women, relative to white and Asian women participate at different frequencies, and then we examine women relative to their male counterparts. When centering the context of political participation through a race–gender approach, we contend that the patterns result from the marginalization of economically, racial, and gendered oppressed people within electoral politics, which has historically positioned their non-electoral participation as the most effective tool to address social and political disadvantage. Racial identity, economic status, and gender identification condition not only the frequency of participation, but the substance of participation.

It is most important to consider the historical context of the differences in access to the political and democratic process when applying an intersectional lens to political participation. The United States, since its settlement, has limited citizenship rights to only white males (Masuoka and Junn 2013). Exclusion from mainstream politics for Black women, Latinas, Indigenous women, Asian American women, and other non-white women persisted through Civil War's Reconstruction (1865–1877), the Women's Suffrage Movement (1840–1920), the Great Depression, and New Deal (1929–1939) and the Civil Rights Movement (1948–1965) for access to the ballot box (see Hardy-Fanta et al. 2016). Only when Black women gained access to the political franchise with the Voting Rights Act (1965) did women's share in elected office and women's participation rates increase overall (Smooth 2006). A preeminent scholar Jewel Lamar Prestage (1991: 89), notes that Black women's involvement in traditional and non-traditional politics is directed towards "altering their disadvantaged status," and their forms of participation are determined by the "legal and cultural circumstances." Using political activism as a means of empowerment is evident in non-established democracies, newly formed democracies such as South Africa (Kuumba 2002; Hill 2004), and countries within Latin America and throughout Brazil (Perry 2016; Bernardino-Costa 2014) where Black women lacked access to formal participation. Women of color's limited institutional access is an important context to situate their non-electoral engagement. In addition, their political participation today through informal channels rather than mainstream political institutions clarified how this history has current-day influence.

Using intersectionality expands the boundaries of what is considered political participation, because people from marginalized backgrounds participate in ways not always measured by scholars. Political participation, such as organizing social clubs, associations, boycotts, and protests, has served as an integral space for political and civic development (Robnett 1996). Narrower conceptions of political participation create the illusion that women are non-participatory (Cohen 2003). However, examining marginalized women's political participation is not consistently documented through large social science surveys, and these social movement mobilizations are often explored in qualitative case-studies of a specific event, or country-specific context. Southern Black women's mobilization against white supremacy, and Black male patriarchy is similar to the mobilization of women outside advanced democracies and beyond North America or Europe.

Beyond the Black–White binary, Latinas and Asian women have engaged in traditional and non-traditional participation at varying frequencies. Latinas have growing political influence as voters, elected officials, and at the state and local levels.[2,3] Like Black women, Latinas have a long history of political organizing within their communities (Montoya, Hardy-Fanta, and Garcia 2000). Latina's leadership in the farmworkers' movement in the Southwest, workers' rights, and immigrant rights' movement solidify Latina's consciousness of racial, ethnic, national origin, and environmental struggle. Latinas' identity encompasses both their gendered and ethnic experiences, which has influenced their levels of political empowerment, collectivist orientations, and political engagement, but also fueled their racial and ethnic consciousness (Jaramillo 2010). However, institutional access through citizenship status, language acquisition, and immigration status conditions how Latinas are participatory. For Latinas and Black women, participation is often viewed as a collectivist act, enabling greater empowerment among their respective communities and coalitions to empower women of color more broadly.

Similar to Latinas, Asian American women were recently enfranchised into formal political participation. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 forbade Asian immigrants from naturalizing as Americans, and Asians were ineligible to vote until 1952. Barriers such as citizenship status keep many Asians concentrated in informal politics, or politics of their homeland countries. Lien (2001) argues that Asian American women simultaneously encounter multiple systems of oppression and gender-related barriers to incorporation, similar to other women of color. Differences within Asian pan-ethnic identity, from East Asian origin to West Asian origin, condition women's engagement (Phillips and Lee 2018). However, as Asian American women gain greater incorporation across nativity, and generation, their participation should rise.

Attention to the histories and context of women of color's participation in the United States is important to an intersectional approach. Beyond the United States, an intersectional approach is necessary to explain other national contexts, including those where subordinate

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[2] See "Latina Candidates in 2020" https://cawp.rutgers.edu/election-analysis/latina-candidates-2020.

[3] See recent report from the National Association of Latino Elected Officers, here https://naleo.org/latino-vote/.

groups are stratified, not just by race, but also as a result of vestiges of imperialism and colonialism through past and ongoing economic exploitation. Additional axes where an intersectional frame unearths discrepancies are the compounding and interlocking disadvantage of nationality, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, religion, immigrant status, economic status and the like. Yuval-Davis (2006) cautions against the use of singular identity, when identities are "constructed and interrelate and affect each other in particular locations and contexts." However, while much has been said theoretically about intersectionality across the Atlantic, few studies of European political participation grapple with these complexities (Mugge and De Jong 2013).

The uses of an intersectional lens towards political participation are ungirded by the incorporation of non-whites into the study of political science, and the prioritization of exploring various positionalities both in America and Europe (see Mügge et al. (2018) for an overview on knowledge production). However, intersectionality should not be limited to just theory (Yuval-Davis 2006), or as politics (Crenshaw 1991), but recognized as a framework to study both origins and outcomes (Hancock 2007a). Theoretically, there are several ways to do this. McCall (2005) calls for an intersectional framework that either embraces inter-categorical complexity or rejects categorization completely. Intercategorical differences unearth the "relationships of inequality among already constituted social groups, as imperfect and ever-changing as they are" (McCall 2005). However, groups remain subject to essentialization. Rejecting categories, however, also focuses on individuals, and masks patterns of structural difference. Qualitative scholars are best suited to address the shifts in complexity over time. There are several salient markers of identity and power that bare influence on political participation with an intersectional lens, and we overview political participation and the influence of sexuality, nativity and ethnicity, and class.

Sexuality

In addition to Black feminist scholars on the intersectionality of race, class, and gender, there is also greater theorizing of heterosexism and homophobia. Many Black feminist researchers lived experiences included identification as gender fluid, gays, and/or lesbians, which was a part of their radical praxis (Lorde 1984; Smith 1983). Male dominance is straight-male dominance, and queer men are marginalized. Unearthing how heteronormativity, as a product of heteropatriarchy is associated with political participation is one avenue of future research. Cohen (1999) moves beyond the single-axis approach of race in studying fissures in Black politics, with respect to the HIV/AIDS pandemic impacting Black people in the 1990s. Regarding ethnicity, when examining Latinx voting behavior in the 2016 presidential election, Moreau, Nuño-Pérez, and Sanchez (2019) find that closeness to one's racial group does not predict participation among sexual minorities. This research corroborates evidence that examining political participation along a single axis of race is not enough alone to explain behaviors among racial and ethnic minorities, including women. However, it also reveals that the sole axis of sexuality, too, falls short to represent meaningful differences in participation. The intersection of sexuality and race, or sexuality and class, have more substantial meaning, than either alone.

Nativity and Ethnicity

Identities marked by religious affiliation, sovereignty, and immigrant status outside of advanced democracies are also influential in women of color's engagement when examining electoral and social movement participation with an intersectional lens. Again, outcomes must reflect the varying social, political, and institutional contexts. For elite political participation, this manifests in how representatives advocate for their constituents and beyond. Fraga et al. (2005) conceptualize how an intersectional lens can advantage Latina legislators to strategically employ their standpoint in their substantive policy focus, given their multiple-identity advantage. In many regards, this translates a disadvantage into advantage, particularly when many Latino/a voters are naturalized citizens. Examining Muslim women councilors in Europe, Tatari and Mencutek (2015) find that religion also factors into representation tactics employed alongside race and gender. In regard to mass political participation, Giugni and Grasso (2019) demonstrate how migrants' association involvement and organizational incorporation varies across Spain and Switzerland.

Beyond traditional forms of participation, intersectionality helps to make sense of women's political activism across the globe (Junn and Brown 2008). Examining Québécois women's grassroots organizations, including the Fédération des Femmes du Québec (FFQ), Laperrière and Lépinard (2016) find that organizational narratives use intersectionality to challenge and transform the very idea of a single feminist identity for all women—including immigrant and Native women, mainly through the issue of violence against women. Labelle (2019) also demonstrates that an intersectional analysis best captures the different motivations of social movement actors in the Canadian #BlackLivesMatter movement. Lastly, employing an intersectional lens to social movement participation, D'Agostino (2019) argues that intersectional invisibility of Roma women across Eastern and Central Europe is associated with different movement strategies across the region within states. Examining the political participation of subordinated groups with respect to nativity, he considers how national origin, migrant status, and citizenship status are identities that intersect and undergird racial, ethnic, and national identification, which in certain contexts influences which participation acts to engage in. The application of intersectional methods in these cases provides ample evidence that an intersectional approach to women's political participation varies across nativity and ethnicity, both within the United States and elsewhere.

Class

Lower-income people, especially from marginalized backgrounds, are less represented in government, which, in turn, minimizes their motivations to participate for greater inclusion. For instance, many politicians and leaders in advocacy organizations are not drawn from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds which limits how they advocate for working-class issues (Cohen 1999; Strolovitch 2007; Carnes 2015; Strolovitch and Crowder 2018). Even among lower social status groups, variation in income, education, and social capital condition how more well-off individuals participate in politics compared to those from lower-economic strata. Broadly, in a capitalist society, class has multiple mechanisms which impact multiple processes of participation. Crosscutting the ability to organize is (and has been) the simultaneous influence of class alongside the expression of other identities. Social justice organizations advocate for the most privileged of their members, which marginalizes those of lower status (Strolovitch 2007). Considering how race, class, and gender form an "Americanist intersectional trilogy" (Isoke 2013), lower status within these domains limits the extent to which marginalized groups possess efficacy in traditional forms of political participation. For instance, protests surrounding welfare provisions, housing conditions, and reproductive rights, in the United States and globally, have their genesis in the struggles and strife of everyday people from lower-class backgrounds.

Intersectionality and Intersectional Methods: An Empirical Examination

Women of color, sexual minorities, migrants, and non-citizens experience structural inequality firsthand within social, economic, and political institutions through their invisibility on one dimension of identity and power (Zinn and Dill 1996). Application of intersectional lens reveals how marginalized people are vulnerable to social, economic, and political disadvantage in interdependent, interactive, and fluid ways, rather than reflecting one axis of identity alone. Brown (2014b) models participation analyses to account for "historical narratives, cultural representation and legal discrimination" that influence women of color's ability to engage in traditional or non-traditional forms of engagement. Examining LBGTQ Canadians, Labelle (2019) applies an intersectional lens and finds that the motivations of queer people of color to engage in protests varies from that of queer non-people of color. These two works highlight the richness of scholarship when an intersectional lens is levied in the study of political participation.

An intersectional lens to the study of participation requires the consideration of multiple, interdependent, interactive identities, events, and institutional structures when examining dynamics of political involvement, providing a rich context of how an axis of identity is salient to the participation act under investigation. Mechanisms include less political mobilization and lower political interest of women of color compared to white women (Brown 2014b), and less access to organizational platforms that center intersectional needs (Strolovitch 2007). In addition, less mainstream organization and candidates have less funding, or financial support to advocate for intersectional issues. The extent to which women of color experience less political outreach and thus are less interested in politics reinforces and entrenches their differential rates of electoral participation.

In political science, the resource model of political participation is primarily employed. It argues that as individuals amass more time, money, and skills to engage in politics, they become the most frequent participants (Verba et al. 1993). The resource model, however, does not account for the distinct influence of race or gender in explaining engagement in a variety of political activities (Brown 2014, Holman 2016). In the aggregate, Latinas and Black women, have fewer financial resources, so in the aggregate they have less recreational spending to engage in politics, specifically through fewer donations to political candidates of their choice. White and Asian American women, in the aggregate, have higher socioeconomic status, yet donate at a similar (and lower) rate. By only examining gender, one could conclude that women donate less than men, and by only examining race, one may say that race is the most predictive factor, when both have simultaneous and inseparable influence (Grumbach, Sahn, and Staszak 2020). However, with an intersectional analysis, one must grapple with the origins and consequences of the income-gap between men and women, and the racial wealth gap in how that manifests in observed behaviors.

Based on these empirical examples, the best practices for researching with an intersectional lens include research questions and studies with accounts for the power and governance of subjects within political institutions (Hancock 2007a), analyzes that account for "historical narratives, cultural representation and legal discrimination" (Brown 2014b), describes the experiences of marginalized groups, but also includes how these identities are produced, shifts from single or unitary categorical approaches, to explorations of multiple approaches (Hancock 2007b), and lastly, overall, it "focuses on the complexity of relationships among multiple social groups within and across analytical categories and not on complexities within single social groups, single categories, or both." (McCall 2005: 402). These principles outline an approach to conducting intersectional research that does not essentialize groups' experiences but focuses on their complexities and recognizes and incorporates their position in the social hierarchy.

Employing an Intersectional Analysis: The CMPS

In order to conduct an intersectional analysis of political participation, it is imperative to have adequate data. This need not be quantitative data, as a range of recent studies apply an intersectional lens with qualitative data (Perry 2016; Labelle 2019; Heaney 2019; Crowder 2021). Simien (2007) argues that scholars move beyond race-or-gender analyses and must construct new theories and methodological approaches to capture intersectionality. Scholars have innovated intersectional methods to reflect complex variations between individuals and systems for the operationalization of intersectionality to reflect its feminist origins (see an overview in Scott and Siltanen 2017). The 2016 Collaborative Multi-racial Post-Election Survey (N = 10,144) innovates in that it has a large sample of racial and ethnic minorities (Barreto et al. 2018), which is ideal for an intersectional analysis to conduct cross- and intra-racial comparisons.[4]

The "gold standard" of American public opinion, the American National Election Study (ANES) falls short in this regard, rendering an intersectional analysis nearly impossible. As Frasure-Yokley (2018) notes, the "insufficient" sample of women of color over time limits analyses of marginalized women's mass behavior which is identical to Hawkesworth's (2003) claim about studying race-gendered institutions like Congress. For instance, in 2016, the ANES included 1,062 non-Hispanic white women, but only 362 women of color. Given the prior constraints of accessible data, there were few inquiries of cross-racial comparisons of race–gender groups. While politics scholars have analyzed legislative behavior with a intersectional lens of a race–gender analysis (Simien 2006; Hughes 2011; Smooth 2011; Brown

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[4] From a survey-sampling standpoint, the CMPS has quotas and targets for the four main racial groups in the United States, hence why we retain the language of racial comparisons. The full methodology statement is here: https://cmpsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/cmps_methodology.pdf.

2014a), this captures the intersectional complexity of elite behavior (Simien 2007), not individuals. However, before the CMPS, the lack of large-scale data minimized the ability to capture intersectional complexity among the masses.

Method: An Example of Intersectional Analysis

We approach the intersectional lens by examining categorical differences among women by race. By doing this, we show how racial and gendered identities structure the relationship to power and determine one's power, which has an omnipotent effect on one's social, political, and economic experiences (Al-Faham, Davis, and Ernst 2019). Methodologically, this is done through a comparative relational approach, where group-based dynamics are captured through estimating subgroup models (Brown 2014b; Berry, Chouhoud, and Junn 2016; Holman 2016; Frasure-Yokley 2018). This model allows a researcher to represent better how lived experiences structure multiple explanatory variables, more than the traditional means of accounting for these identities within a single model and assuming an "equality of individual agency" (Junn and Masuoka 2008: 32). However, in this chapter we do not simultaneously employ multiple categories without having to control for one factor over another. We concur with these scholars and apply the comparative relational approach to examine the dynamics of political participation *among* several theoretically relevant identities, supplemented with full sample interaction analyses when comparing directly *across* race and gender. We examine political characteristics of individuals by their race and gender, and conclude by discussing relevant intra-group differences.

In Table 42.1, we look descriptively at political characteristics that shape perceptions of government, political motivations, and political ideologies.[5] Known cleavages exist with respect to political trust, motivation, and interest among individuals with marginalized backgrounds because of the past discrimination they have experienced collectively in politics (see Nunnally 2012). Considering the institutional context, legal barriers, and significant costs associated with political participation, we expect that women of color are less trusting of political institutions compared to men of color and White women. But, we find that Asian men and women are most trustful of the federal government, and Black women are least trustful. White Americans are the *least* trustful of government in Washington, yet not their local governments. This reins in how the institutional context of federalism unequally influences the lives of Black and Latinas, which may render them to have lower trust as compared to whites and Asians.

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[5] Question wording for these items are Trust in Washington: *How much of the time do you trust the Federal government in Washington, DC to do what is right?* Respondents who select "Never at all" and "Only Sometimes" are categorically marked as Low Trust, and? Respondents who select Most of the Time, and Just about Always are categorically marked as High Trust. Trust in Local Government: *How about your local government in your city or town? How much of the time do you think you can trust the local government to do what is right?* Respondents who select "Never at all" and "Only Sometimes" are categorically marked as Low Trust, and? Respondents who select Most of the Time, and Just about Always are categorically marked as High Trust.

Table 42.1 Political Characteristics of Women by Race–Gender in the 2016 CMPS

	Asian			*Black*			*Latina/o*			*White*		
	W	*M*	*%*	*W*	*M*	*%*	*W*	*M*	*%*	*W*	*M*	*%*
Trust												
Trust in Local Govt. (High)	45%	49%	−4%	33%	39%	−6%	34%	43%	−9%	43%	42%	+1%
Trust in Washington (High)	36%	36%	0%	26%	28%	−2%	25%	28%	−3%	18%	16%	+2%
Motivation												
Political Interest (High)	57%	70%	−13%	65%	73%	−8%	62%	75%	−13%	68%	80%	−12%
Contacted by A Political Organization	18%	21%	−3%	31%	29%	+2%	21%	27%	−6%	25%	30%	−5%
Partisan Identity												
Republican	16%	19%	−3%	4%	6%	−2%	11%	17%	−6%	30%	36%	−6%
Democrat	45%	39%	+6%	75%	62%	+13%	56%	44%	+12%	32%	22%	+10%
Independent	32%	36%	−4%	17%	26%	−9%	24%	32%	−8%	31%	36%	−5%
Other Party	7%	6%	+1%	5%	5%	0%	8%	7%	1%	8%	6%	+2%
Ideology												
Very Liberal	9%	10%	−1%	17%	16%	+1%	11%	14%	−3%	9%	7%	+2%
Liberal	20%	20%	0%	19%	21%	−2%	18%	23%	−5%	16%	15%	+1%
Moderate	42%	42%	0%	37%	38%	−1%	38%	37%	1%	38%	24%	+14%
Conservative	15%	16%	−1%	9%	8%	+1%	10%	13%	−3%	15%	27%	−12%
Very Conservative	5%	4%	+1%	5%	6%	−1%	7%	5%	+2%	12%	19%	−7%
None of These	10%	9%	+1%	12%	11%	+1%	14%	8%	+6%	9%	9%	0%

Cell entries are percentages.
Source: Collaborative Multiracial Post Election Study (CMPS) 2016 Weighted to 2011 American Community Study (ACS) Estimates.
Analysis of Female Respondents (n = 6630). Counts by race: Asian (n = 1800), Black (n = 2156), Latina (n = 2041), White (n = 643) Analysis of Male Respondents (n = 3514). Counts by race: Asian (n = 1206), Black (n = 956), Latina (n = 961), White (n = 391)

What might an intersectional lens reveal about political motivation? We corroborate with prior analysis of women of color and find that white women have greater political interest, and receive more political outreach than women of color (Brown 2014b). However, white women experience less outreach than white men. Overall, across race, compared to men, women are less politically interested and receive less outreach, but an intersectional lens reveals that Black women men have the smallest gap in political interest, and are most contacted by outreach organizations.

In Table 42.1, we demonstrate what differences underlie partisan identity and political ideology among men and women, and show the value of an intersectional approach to these dispositions which influence vote choice, candidate support, and involvement in political networks. An intersectional lens to partisan identity and ideology unearths patterns that a unitary approach conceals (Junn 2017). Narrative around electoral participation which categorize, the "Black vote," the "women's vote" the "progressive vote" must include differences by gender and ideology, as we've done in Table 42.1, to show how racial minority groups are *not* as unified on their partisan identity. Over one-third of Black men, Latino men, Asians and whites identify as politically independent. Further, narratives of polarization are enriched with an intersectional analysis. When examining ideology, Asian and Black women are most like their male counterparts, but Latinas and white women have larger gender gaps with their male counterparts. A host of explanations may map on to these differences. However, moving beyond a single unitary approach to political characteristics highlights how intragroup differences within racial-gendered groups bears influence on their frequency and substance of political participation.

Political Participation

In Table 42.2, we apply an intersectional lens to political participation, examining traditional, non-traditional, and electoral acts. Considering the historical and legal circumstances, one might expect that women, who have a rich history of political activism, are more engaged in non-traditional acts, yet groups with higher immigrant (and foreign-born) populations, including Latinos and Asians, may be less electorally participatory, and white males, not men of color, are most engaged in traditional forms of participation since the majority of state and federal elected officials are white men. Examining different forms of political participation, we elucidate differences in each race–gender group's attachment to a political act as a form of collective action. We find that women participate less than men. However, overall, we consistently find the largest gender gap in reports of traditional and non-traditional political activity between white men and women, and the smallest gaps among Asians, Blacks, and Latinos.

Across the board, we find lower participation in traditional acts. First, whites are more engaged in acts that require financial resources such as contributing money to candidates. Given the economic status of white women (even though less than white men), relative to Black women and Latinas, this may explain recreational income which white women can utilize to influence politics (Michener and Brower 2020). On the contrary, a greater share of Black women and Latinas reported participation in protest demonstrations than both Asian and white women. However, compared to women, men more frequently contact elected officials for information and contribute money to a campaign. Gender differences in

Table 42.2 Participation Levels and Race–Gender Gaps for Traditional, Non-Traditional, and Electoral Political Participation CMPS 2016

	Asian			*Black*			*Latina/o*			*White*		
	W	*M*	*%*	*W*	*M*	*%*	*W*	*M*	*%*	*W*	*M*	*%*
Traditional												
Worked for a Candidate	5%	6%	−1%	6%	9%	−3%	4%	6%	−2%	5%	8%	−3%
Contributed Money to A Campaign	8%	13%	−5%	12%	16%	−4%	7%	12%	−5%	16%	23%	−7%
Contacted an Official about an Issue	9%	14%	−5%	15%	21%	−6%	11%	15%	−4%	24%	36%	−12%
Contacted an Official for more information	9%	14%	−5%	15%	18%	−3%	9%	17%	−8%	15%	25%	−10%
Electoral												
Registered to Vote	29%	47%	−18%	69%	62%	7%	38%	50%	−12%	62%	83%	−21%
Of those Registered, Voted in 2016 Election	93%	95%	−2%	89%	91%	−2%	91%	91%	0%	94%	96%	−2%
Non-Traditional												
Attended Protest	7%	6%	1%	10%	11%	−1%	11%	10%	1%	6%	9%	−3%
Discussed Politics	77%	77%	0%	81%	83%	−2%	77%	84%	−7%	88%	88%	0%
Wore a Political Button	10%	15%	−5%	22%	21%	1%	14%	19%	−5%	20%	26%	−6%
Worked with Community to Solve a Problem	13%	17%	−4%	18%	24%	−6%	15%	20%	−5%	19%	27%	−8%
Attended Community Meetings	11%	18%	−7%	21%	25%	−4%	17%	25%	−8%	18%	28%	−10%
Of those that Attended Community Meetings, for an Organization	68%	53%	15%	72%	60%	12%	72%	58%	14%	71%	72%	−1%
Discussed Politics on Social Media	25%	24%	1%	35%	33%	2%	33%	37%	−4%	35%	30%	5%
Signed a Petition	22%	28%	−6%	36%	37%	−1%	26%	30%	−4%	36%	38%	−2%
Boycotted an Item	14%	15%	−1%	13%	15%	−2%	11%	15%	−4%	22%	24%	−2%

Cell entries are percentages.
Analysis of Female Respondents (n = 6630). Counts by race: Asian (n = 1800), Black (n = 2156), Latina (n = 2041), White (n = 643) Analysis of Male Respondents (n = 3514). Counts by race: Asian (n = 1206), Black (n = 956), Latina (n = 961), White (n = 391)
Source: Collaborative Multiracial Post Election Study (CMPS) 2016 Weighted to 2011 American Community Study (ACS)

traditional participation reinforces women's smaller share in formal political institutions at varied levels of government.

Overall, we observe consistent rates of non-traditional participation among men as compared to women. Non-traditional acts of participation require resources, such as civic skills, which ease costs of engaging in political acts. Given women's relegation to the periphery of traditional politics, we may expect they are most engaged in these acts. A larger share of white women, Black women, Latinas, and Asian women discuss politics, with trivial or non-existent differences as compared to men. In fact, only in the act of discussing politics publicly on social media do we find that Asian, Black, and white women engage more than men. This may reflect the racialized and gender climate engendered by the election of Donald Trump that women organized in response to (e.g., Women's March in early 2017); alternatively it may reflect women's concentration in community organizing and participation as compared to elected offices (Crowder and Smith 2020). Interestingly, men report greater rates of participation in problem-solving community work, compared to women. Considering the minimal differences between rates of engagement between men and women of color, we conclude that women may in fact underreport their engagement, or not recognize it as inherently political (Coffé and Bolzendahl 2010; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 1997). If women are politically engaged, but not given the opportunity to reflect on and report back on said participation in the existing political participation battery, then new and innovative questions must emerge to reflect the nuances of women's engagement.

Electoral Participation and Vote Choice

An intersectional take on electoral participation must account for discrepancies in eligibility to vote. Registration rates reflect eligibility criteria shaped by the prevalence of state residence, disenfranchisement due to criminal justice contact, and immigrant status across groups (Smooth 2006). Differential registration rates among American women skews who is eligible to participate through formal mechanisms, which likely occurs in other contexts of non-universal registration. In the CMPS, males are more likely to be registered, apart from Black women, where a greater proportion of women are registered. Insignificant differences exist between registered voters. Thus, using intersectionality as a guide, it is observed that electoral participation breaks down at eligibility, not at the act of voting. More studies of political participation must account for differences between voter and non-voters in their research design, in order to speak broadly to group-based dynamics of participation beyond those who are registered.

Lastly, complicating the narrative of a "women's vote" in support of a white female candidate, only 37 percent of white women in the 2016 CMPS supported Hillary Clinton, compared to 66 percent of Asians, 72 percent of Latinas, and 85 percent of Black women. Thus, an intersectional lens reveals that a plurality of white females voted for Donald Trump, while most women of color supported Hillary Clinton (Junn 2017). Indeed, Frasure-Yokley (2018) shows that white women embraced ambivalent sexism, whereas women of color rejected it. These electoral differences are concealed through using gender, or race alone, without examining one axis of the intersection.

Conclusion: Challenges and Opportunities for Political participation Research

As inequalities marked by race, gender, and socioeconomic status persist and become more entrenched in society, the neglect of an intersectional framework in the study of political participation omits critical voices and opportunities for empowerment for marginalized groups. For instance, at the time of writing, global society grapples with the COVID-19 pandemic which has implications for how folks can engage in collective action (see Deckman et al. 2020; Grasso et al. 2021).

For groups which are multiply marginalized along race, ethnicity, class, gender, nationality, and sexual orientation, intersectionality as an approach examines not only the acts of political participation, but also how the patterns reflect the incorporation of these groups within broader society. Future political participation research must contend with the conflux of multiple identities and consciousness, not just of disadvantaged identities but privileged identities—whiteness, masculinity, ultra-wealthy citizens—who oft levy their advantage to maintain political power. To examine interlocking institutional factors such as registration, citizenship status, and demographics such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and geography, it is imperative to have data which allow for comparison and grapples with such complexity. The lack of this kind of data is the principal limitation to studying mass behavior with an intersectional lens.

While we utilized survey data, few publicly available data sets have sample sizes large enough to disaggregate by race alone, let alone multiple identities. An intersectional analysis requires data where complex relationships are identified and explored. Incorporation of groups at the margins of society—including, but not limited to, queer people of color, trans-folks of color, undocumented folks—are needed to push to the margins of mainstream politics. Identifying, recruiting, and observing their political participation may be more suited for in-depth qualitative analysis, such as interviews, focus groups, case-studies, and ethnographies to best share their political characteristics and motivations surrounding political decision making. This is paramount if political participation scholars intend to study inequities and inequalities and their influence. Innovations in research methods are imperative to engage these communities with complexity and nuance, rather than flattening their experiences to a single axis of a less salient identity. Conducting research with an "intersectional lens" involves choices of the researcher made in the analysis, design, and write-up, which require great thought, intention, and citation to Black feminist researchers.

However, while contextualizing and situating identities' power is important to the study of politics, misapplications of intersectionality diminish respect of the concept in the discipline. However, the mainstreaming of intersectionality among the public and among scholars only interested in group-based differences, yet not the conditions that give rise to differences in observed outcomes, has proliferated ambiguity and imprecision around the analytical purchase of an intersectional framework. For instance, the misuse of "identity-politics," and the deployment of intersectionality without incorporation of historically marginalized identities obfuscates what it made visible like "where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects."[6] Future applications of an intersectional lens and political participation should better situate choice, agency, and accessibility to organizational and institutional influence, including, as more political representatives from multiple marginalized backgrounds are elected, how might this empower or depress political participation from multiply marginalized groups? What are novel forms of political participation practiced by multiple marginalized people which have yet to be studied? Does an intersectional lens incorporate the situations in which dominant identities are marginalized?

We urge scholars of political participation to frame their analysis and implications of their scholarship with an intersectional lens, not as an afterthought, but as an imperative in an increasingly diversifying and interconnected world. An intersectional lens to the study of participation provides critical engagement with the distribution of power and resources in society. Particularly, the intersectional lens situates who and in what structures do individuals, and socially constructed groups wield power. We caution against research that fails to take differences into account to introduce neat stories about human behavior's messy politics.

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CHAPTER 43

POLITICAL DISENGAGEMENT

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A citizen who engages with politics is seen as exemplary in a liberal democracy. Especially within the republican tradition of thought, stretching back to ancient Greece and Rome, self-government demands an active citizen. In the Greek tradition, engagement is viewed as a developmental experience of intrinsic value. In the Roman tradition, the emphasis is more on the instrumental value of participation, to defend citizens' liberties and rights (Held 2006). That political engagement has desirable qualities is a recurring theme of political studies. In modern times it has been promoted by de Tocqueville (1835/2002) and Mill (1861) and more recently by Pateman (1970) and Mansbridge (1983). It is often argued that modern liberal democracy, in particular, requires the active engagement of its people: that it provides stability and legitimacy for a democratic political system, fosters a vibrant civil society, and makes for better governance by supporting accountability and responsiveness from political elites (see also Almond and Verba 1963).

Beyond liberal democracies, political engagement is also viewed as a key focus of study (Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007; Tsai and Xu 2018) but there are good reasons to believe that engagement might have different origins and dynamics in other regimes. The "liberal" dimension (Beetham1992) of liberal democracies includes separation of powers and the rule of law, a guaranteed freedom of expression and assembly, and limits to the reach of government, all of which we would expect to importantly shape the opportunity structures facing citizens and why they might choose to engage with politics or disengage from them (e.g., Kitschelt 1986). Citizens in liberal democracies are supposed to be able to make autonomous life choices without having to enter the public sphere, and to have a more truly free choice of how to engage with it if they choose to do so (e.g., Dahl 1989; Freedom House 2019). In contrast, citizens in other regimes do not generally have the benefit of the same protections, opportunities, and "as of right" freedom of choice. There may be pressure from authorities to engage to demonstrate support, and there may be costs to protesting or expressing opposition (e.g., Hellmeier and Weidmann 2020; Tsai and Xu 2018). Therefore, any discussion of political engagement should be careful to consider the type of political regime in question.

Similarly, political engagement was initially discussed almost exclusively in terms of voting in elections (Almond and Verba 1963; Tingsten 1937), but political scientists have for decades now highlighted the multiple ways in which citizens might engage with their political systems (Barnes and Kaase 1979; Ekman and Amnå 2012; Giugni and Grasso, this volume). In addition to formal acts of participation such as voting, contacting elected representatives, being active in a political party, and perhaps running for office, citizens can try to shape their political system and society in more informal ways through campaigning for (and against) specific causes and policies (Giugni and Grasso 2019a). They can do this by attending (and organizing) public demonstrations and rallies, signing petitions (on paper or online), boycotting particular products or corporations, taking part in social movements and social media campaigns, and in various other ways, including proliferating forms of online engagement (Theocharis and van Deth 2018; van Deth 2014; Part IV, this volume).

Aside from that, the word *engagement* does not necessarily entail *participation*: one could be cognitively engaged with politics without being behaviorally engaged; for instance, by following political news and public debate, discussing them with friends, and perhaps just by thinking about them (see van Deth 2000). However, when stretching the term that far, it quickly risks losing any useful meaning, at least for our purposes (see also Berger 2009). Therefore, academics have in recent years organized our conceptualization of political engagement (see also Grasso 2016). Ekman and Amnå (2012) to call activities such as demonstrations "extra-parliamentary participation" or "activism," and along with electoral participation they dub those activities "manifest participation"; whereas "civic engagement" (including voluntary work) and "involvement" (interest and attentiveness) are called "latent participation." Similarly, Barrett and Zani (2015) distinguish between "conventional" and "non-conventional" political participation, "civic participation" (such as voluntary work and non-political organizations), and "psychological engagement"—the latter referring to cognitive forms such as attention and affective orientations.

These distinctions do not render ancient ideas about the benefits of political engagement obsolete, though they do complicate them. Perhaps traditional electoral engagement most serves the function of legitimizing the democratic system, whereas less traditional engagement helps foster civil society and citizens' civic qualities, as well as providing avenues for contention, especially in non-democratic regimes. However, recent decades have seen rising concerns that citizens are increasingly disengaging from political affairs. In the face of social processes, often under the umbrella of "post-modernization," membership of political parties, trade unions, and other political and social organizations have declined dramatically and have seemed to lose much of their social and psychological relevance to citizens (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Mair and van Biezen 2001; Putnam 2000; Van Biezen et al. 2012; Webb 2009), and perhaps relatedly, participation in general elections has gradually declined across many developed democracies in recent decades (Hooghe and Kern 2016; Valgarðsson 2019; Franklin, this volume). At the same time, while extra-institutional participation increased in the latter half of the twentieth century, it is by no means clear if more recent generations are engaging as much in those ways, or to extents that compensate for disengagement from other political activities (Giugni and Grasso 2019b; Grasso 2016; Serra and Smets, this volume).

Because of the benefits associated with political engagement, these are concerning trends in their own right: what does this mean for the quality of civil society, the legitimacy of democratic government, and the quality and responsiveness of its policies (see also Stoker 2017; Part VIII, this volume)? They are also concerning because of what they may signal: these trends have been the motivation for long-standing literature on an emerging "crisis of democracy" in the modern world (Crozier et al. 1975; Ercan and Gagnon 2014; van der Meer 2017) and are widely considered a worrying symptom of a growing disease which threatens the health and stability of democratic systems (Fieldhouse et al. 2007; Hay 2007; Martin 2015). In other words, authors and commentators routinely claim that growing disengagement signals the public's eroding support for their political system (Stoker 2006; Martin 2015; Hay 2007; Marsh, O'Toole, and Jones 2007; Hay and Stoker 2009; Dalton 2004; Grasso 2016).

Nevertheless, this concern with disengagement is not shared by all. For those in the "protective" paradigm of democracy, competitive elitism and limited government are desirable, whereas widespread citizen engagement can be considered undesirable (Held 2006; Schumpeter 1942). Moreover, whether disengagement actually signals a disaffected citizenry is unclear. There are at least three counterarguments to consider: first, perhaps disengagement is good. It could be a result of "hapathy": political elites are meeting my needs, so I need not worry and can go about my daily life in peace (van Deth 2000). The second argument is that disengagement is fine if it is temporary. It is acceptable for critical citizens to be on "stand-by," waiting to engage when they feel it is needed (Amnå and Ekman 2015; Hooghe and Dejaeghere 2007; Norris 1999; Rosanvallon 2008). Finally, it can be argued that disengagement is somewhat paradoxically a political act, arguably even a democratic one in certain circumstances (Mackenzie et al. 2020). While some of these debates are strictly normative, many of them are ultimately empirical and raise a fundamental question about how disengagement relates to citizens' broader, more latent support for political actors and institutions. Is disengagement a reflection of contented apathy or discontented alienation? If a citizen finds their political leaders trustworthy, is the most likely response to let them get on with it and disengage? Or is it that if a citizen lacks trust in politics, they will deem attempting to influence political outcomes pointless and therefore disengage?

In line with this, we explore these questions in this chapter, arguing that the answers depend on whether the disengagement is from mainstream politics, protest politics, or politics altogether, and whether the political system has in place the citizen protections of a liberal democracy or not. We explore these relationships empirically on both the system and citizen levels, using pooled global data from the seven waves of the World Values Survey (WVS) and European Values Study (EVS), conducted between 1981 and 2020, and looking at the relationship between disengagement and political trust across two regime types and three types of engagement which are arguably archetypes for three variants of engagement: voting, participation in demonstrations, and political interest.

Disengagement and Political Trust in Different Political Systems

Political disengagement as a form of inactivity presents some challenges for researchers that are normally focused on activity. Are we referring to disengagement from formal acts of participation in the political system, such as voting and active party membership? Or do we instead refer to disengagement from any kind of political activity? And when we say disengagement, is it enough to not participate in political activities, or does one also have to be mentally tuned out as well—is disengagement a strictly behavioral concept or also a cognitive quality?

Each of these different forms of disengagement might be associated with a different set of implications for the health of political systems. Bringing our attention to this important distinction almost half a century ago, Citrin (1974: 979) summarized: "The standard hypothesis, of course, is that political disaffection (cynicism, alienation) is associated with a rejection of conventional or "conformist" models of political participation (...) the politically cynical should be more likely than those who trust the government *either* to withdraw from political activity altogether *or* to engage in noncustomary, sometimes illegal, activities such as participating in sit-ins or riots, or organizing for revolution" (see also Giugni and Grasso 2019b). Lack of trust could drive disengagement with conventional politics while stimulating the search for less conventional ways to force change, or it might drive citizens simply to give up. In Hirschman's (1970) framework of "exit, voice and loyalty," untrusting citizens might either *exit* (disengage) entirely from the political process or *voice* their dissatisfaction by engaging in extra-institutional protest activities (Katsanidou and Eder 2018). The implications and origins of disengagement are likely conditional on the type of engagement to which we refer.

Our shortcut to exploring the implications of disengagement for the health of political systems is the concept of trust: here construed as citizens' "basic evaluative or affective orientation towards government" (Miller 1974: 952). The UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, worried in a speech delivered in 2018: "Our world is suffering from a bad case of 'trust deficit disorder'. People are feeling troubled and insecure. Trust is at a breaking point. Trust in national institutions. Trust among states. Trust in the rules-based global order. Within countries, people are losing faith in political establishments" (NDTV 2018). The OECD (2017) argues: "Trust plays a very tangible role in the effectiveness of government. Few perceptions are more palpable than that of trust or its absence. Governments ignore this at their peril." Trust-building has been a key strategy of OECD (largely liberal democratic) governments in the last decade or so (Bouckaert 2012).

The relationship between disengagement and trust is thus likely to be conditional on the type of disengagement, and it is also likely conditional on the type of political system in which citizens live. A majority of political science studies of political engagement focus on democratic societies, but the issue is also highly relevant in non-democratic and hybrid autocratic regimes (e.g., if we want to understand allegiance to the regime and prospects for democratization), and there are good reasons to expect that the determinants of engagement are not the same there as they are in democratic regimes: the protections afforded in a liberal democracy alter the calculus for engagement (see also Norris, this volume). The enshrined rights to freedom of speech, association, and organization in civil society mean that the barriers to engagement are lower, but also that there are opportunities to free ride on the efforts of others (Cf. Olson 1993). In non-liberal regimes, citizens do not have the same kind of autonomy about their political engagement, and their feelings about the regime are thus less consequential: they might be punished for not going to vote or for taking part in protests, or they might be obliged to attend demonstrations in support of their regime (Froissart 2014; Hellmeier and Weidmann 2020; Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007; Tsai and Xu 2018).

Thus, trust might have a weaker relationship with behavioral engagement in non-liberal regimes. The distinction between different types of engagement might also be more consequential there: whether engagement is state-sanctioned and promoted or associated with oppositional activities and civil society institutions that are critical of the government. Different mechanisms can be at play here: perhaps untrusting citizens are more likely to disengage altogether in these regimes, for example for fear of retribution, or perhaps they are *more* likely to engage in protest activities than citizens of liberal democracies, because they feel there is more at stake. In contrast, we would not expect the relationship between *cognitive* engagement and trust to be different, since these arguments apply to behavioral engagement, rather than whether citizens simply take an interest in politics or not.

Disentangling these elements could importantly inform theoretical and normative debates about disengagement. Disengagement caused by lack of trust is arguably progressively more concerning as we adopt an ever-broader conception of engagement: if "untrusting" citizens are participating in non-conventional ways or at least paying attention, we might be less concerned than if they are not. Similarly, while we might expect untrusting citizens to try to influence politics through extra-institutional means in any setting, we might deem it even more important in non-liberal regimes than in democratic states, if we are to maintain hopes for democratization catalyzed by the people. In this chapter, we therefore provide an empirical overview of the global relationship between political disengagement and trust, taking different types of engagement and regime into account.

Global Patterns of Political Trust and Disengagement

Our analysis is primarily based on data from the WVS/EVS (EVS 2015; Inglehart et al. 2014; World Values Survey 2020b; for a review of survey data approaches, see Anduiza and Tormos, this volume). We start by presenting the global patterns of aggregate levels of trust in parliament and three types of engagement in each country-year of the seven waves of the study conducted between 1981-2020.[1] We add data on officially reported voter turnout from the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) database, as well as a binary measure of regime status—with countries classified as either "free" or not—from Freedom House (the latter category here includes countries classified as "partly free" and "not free").[2] In the second part of our analysis, we look at various measures of political trust in the most recent (2017–2020) wave of the WVS, analyzing the relationship between different trust and engagement measures at the individual level, while controlling for various demographic variables.

Of course, the concepts of political trust and support can and have been measured in numerous ways but here, we utilize the conventional measures of trust/confidence[3] in political institutions fielded in the WVS and EVS survey projects for most or all of their history. These measures simply ask respondents whether they have "a great deal" of confidence in the institution, or "quite a lot," "not very much" or "none at all." In addition to these trust measures, the WVS has since its first wave asked respondents about various extra-institutional political actions: including "attending lawful/peaceful demonstrations," "signing a petition," "joining in boycotts," and "joining strikes"—asking whether they "have done any of these things," "might do it," or "would never under any circumstances do it." For parsimony and presentation, we focus on the first of these measures of extra-institutional participation in our analysis, as according to Giugni and Grasso (2019b: 66), Finally, the WVS has asked respondents in all waves whether they are "very," "somewhat," "not very," or "not at all" interested in politics, and in our analysis, we treat this as a basic measure of cognitive engagement.

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[1] This aggregate dataset includes survey measures of 640.332 respondents in 115 countries and 410 country-years.

[2] In the aggregate dataset, the correlation of this measure with the V-Dem index of liberal democracy is 0.87 and the correlation with the Polity IV index is 0.70.

[3] While distinct in the English language, measures using these two terms have been treated as equivalent in the study of political trust (Uslaner 2018; Van der Meer and Zmerli, 2017: 4).

For the purposes of the aggregate analysis, we collapse these into binary variables, so we report the percentage of respondents who report "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in parliament, those who say they have taken part in demonstrations, and those who say they are "very" or "somewhat" interested in politics. Unfortunately, the WVS only asks about election turnout in the most recent wave, so for that we compare the trust measures with data from the IDEA database on official voter turnout in each country-year where elections were held. We use this data to explore the association between levels of trust and engagement in the two regime types ("free" countries and others). In line with our discussion above, we explore cognitive as well as behavioral engagement, and engagement with institutional as well as extra-institutional politics: for this, we use the aggregate measure of turnout as well as the survey measures of participation in demonstrations and political interest. For this aggregate analysis, we use the WVS/EVS measure of confidence in the national legislature/parliament, which is available in all waves of the pooled dataset.

In Figure 43.1, we plot levels of voter turnout by levels of trust in parliament in each country-year (official voter turnout as reported by the IDEA project and the percentage of

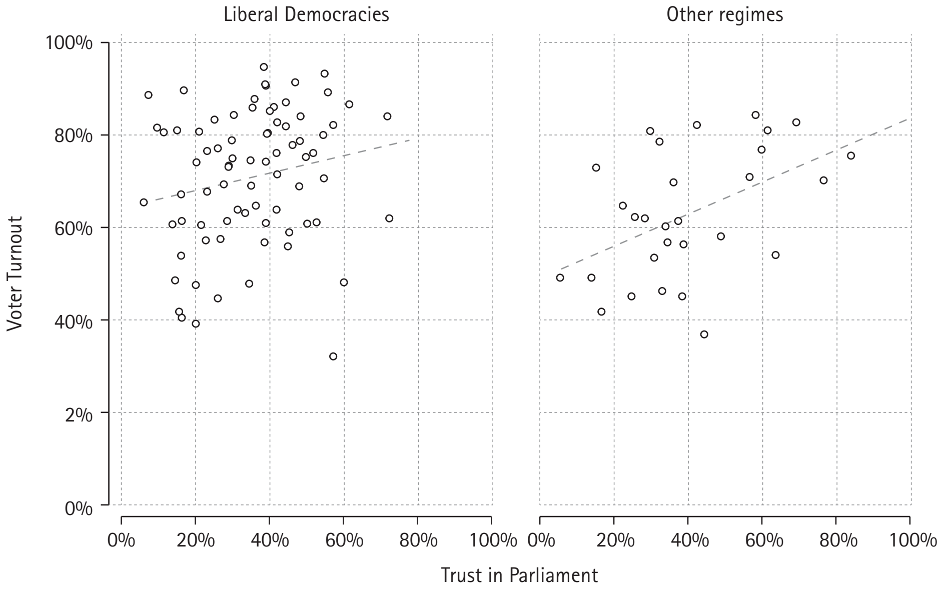

FIGURE 43.1 Aggregate Level of Voter Turnout and Trust in Parliament by Country-Year and Regime Type

Sources: Measures of trust from all seven waves of the World Values Study (WVS)/European Values Study (EVS), IDEA data for voter turnout, and Freedom House data for regime type.

WVS/EVS respondents who say they have "quite a lot" or "a great deal" of confidence in their parliament), separated by the Freedom House classification of regime types. This reveals a positive correlation among both regime types: countries with higher levels of trust in parliament also have higher rates of voter turnout. This relationship is considerably stronger in non-liberal democracies;[4] however, trust and electoral participation is more positively related in regimes classified as "not free" or "partly free" (Pearson's $r = 0.47$) than in "free" countries ($r = 0.20$).

Turning to extra-institutional engagement, in Figure 43.2 we present the relationship between the measure of "attending peaceful demonstrations" (which we treat here as identifying protest participation, although it should be noted that some demonstrations, especially in autocratic states, are held in support of the regime) and trust in parliament.[5] This relationship is positive among "free" countries: countries with greater levels of political trust report higher levels of protest engagement. In partly free and not free countries, however, this relationship is clearly negative: with decreasing political trust, we find increasing levels of engagement in protest activity.[6] Scatterplots for these same relationships for other measures of extra-institutional participation (not presented here) show the same strong pattern for signing petitions (a positive relationship in liberal democracies but a negative one in other regimes), whereas boycotting and joining strikes are generally less prevalent but the former shows a positive relationship in liberal democracies and the latter a negative relationship in other regimes.

Figure 43.3 presents the relationship between trust and *cognitive* engagement (political interest), finding a positive association in all cases but a substantially stronger one among non-democracies than democracies.[7] This suggests that generally, those who lack trust in government are not highly attentive "monitorial citizens" (Hooghe and Dejaeghere 2007; Schudson 1996) but rather choose to tune out entirely, and that this is especially the case in autocratic countries; perhaps because the hope for changing politics is particularly low and so the cost–benefit analysis becomes importantly different.

Our analysis thus invites some nuance when thinking about trust and engagement in different types of regimes: trust is positively related to both voting and political interest among both types of regimes and more strongly so in non-liberal democracies, but while protest engagement is also positively related to trust in liberal democracies, it is *negatively* related in other systems. In other words, disengagement from voting reflects a lack of trust across regime types and countries where citizens are generally less trusting of their parliaments also have citizens who are generally less interested in politics. However, while non-liberal democracies with less public support have less interested citizens, they actually see more citizen engagement with protests or demonstrations.

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[4] For parsimony, we use this term for these countries, but recognize that any classification of liberal democracies is likely to be hotly contested, and that this particular group includes several electoral democracies with some liberal qualities (as these are classed as only "partly free" by Freedom House).

[5] We also explored other measures of extra-institutional engagement such as signing petitions, joining boycotts, and joining strikes, and these showed very similar patterns.

[6] The aggregate correlation (Pearson's r) between trust in parliament and demonstration participation is equal to 0.31 among "free" countries but -0.35 among "partly free" and "not free" countries. VOV: Yes, that is correct

[7] The aggregate correlation between trust in parliament and political interest is equal to 0.28 among "free" countries but 0.42 in the other groups of countries.

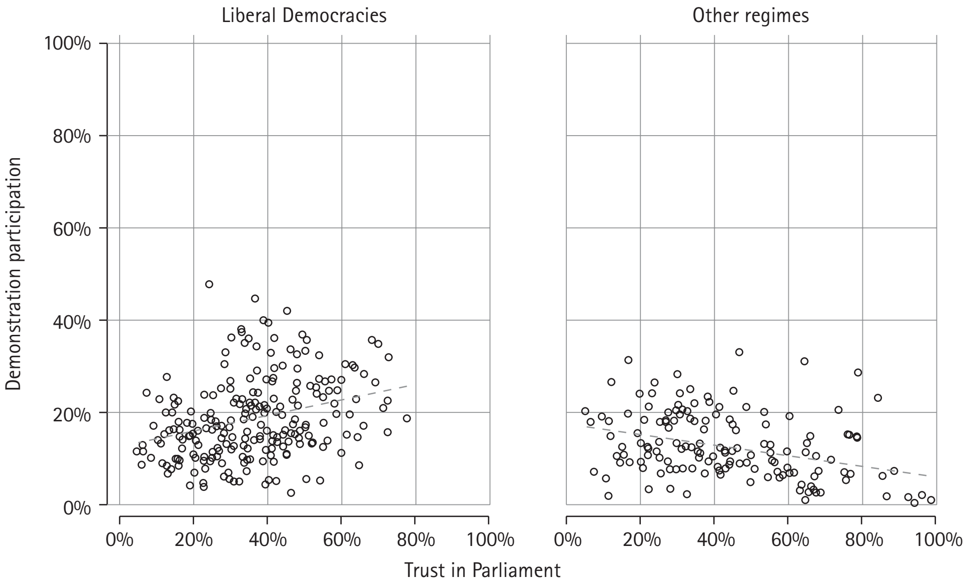

FIGURE 43.2 Aggregate Level of Demonstration Participation and Trust in Parliament by Country-Year and Regime Type

Sources: WVS/EVS and Freedom House.

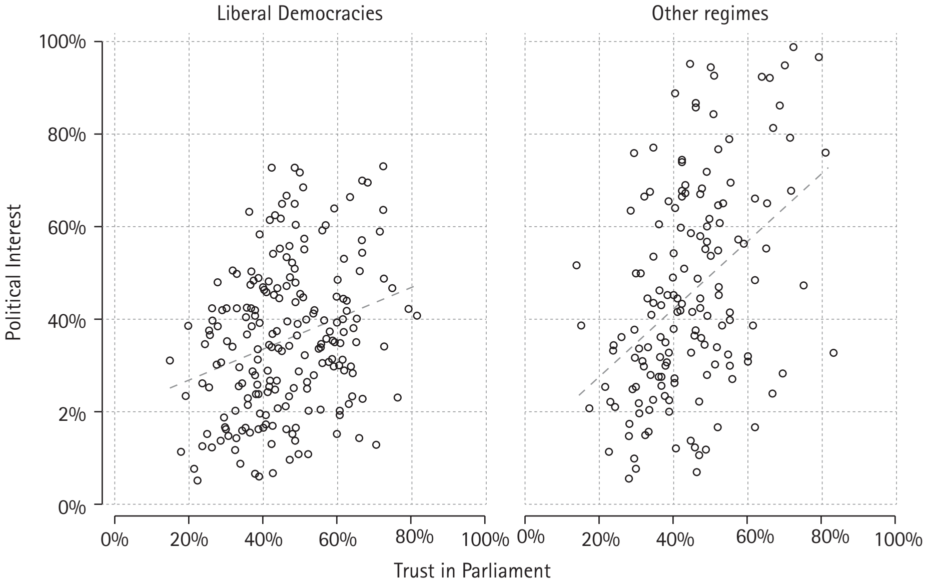

FIGURE 43.3 Aggregate Level of Political Interest and Trust in Parliament by Country-Year and Regime Type

Sources: WVS/EVS and Freedom House.

This counterintuitive finding might be explained by the fact that political interest is generally much more widespread than protest participation and does not come with the same costs as protesting: while a large part of the citizenry might tune out from politics in the least trusting non-democracies, the minority who might engage in protest become more likely to do so. At this point, we can only speculate about this, but these results highlight the importance of distinguishing between types of engagement as well as the type of regime when talking about the implications of citizen disengagement. At the same time, they highlight the need to look beneath the aggregate level. While these results provide important context for interpreting different levels of engagement in different countries, they raise some puzzles and do not consider the relationship between trust and engagement among individuals. In the next section, we explore that individual-level relationship.

Individual-level Dynamics of Disengagement and Political Trust

While instructive for our interpretations of different levels of political engagement in different countries, the results of the previous section do not conclusively tell us whether trusting *individuals* are also more (or less) likely to protest, vote, or be interested in politics. In this section, we look beneath the surface of the broad country-level patterns to the individual-level relationship between political trust and engagement, again separating our analysis by Freedom House status.

To examine those individual-level relationships, we turn our attention to the respondent data in the most recent WVS/EVS wave (2017–2020),[8] and here we broaden our analysis by looking at the three types of engagement by measures of confidence in several institutions and using a question about voting which was asked for the first time in this wave: respondents were asked "When elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never?" in national and local elections, and we code this into a binary variable indicating those who responded "always" (in the analysis, we focus on national elections). The dependent variables are therefore binary measures for those who said they "always" vote in national elections, those who said they had participated in demonstrations, and those who said they were "very" or "somewhat" interested in politics. The independent variables are the WVS/EVS four-point categorical measures of trust in six political and civil institutions (parliament, government, political parties, the courts, civil service, and police), with "none at all" as the reference category.

We regress the engagement measures on these different trust measures, using multilevel logistic regression models with random effects at the level of country,[9] controlling for various demographic variables: respondents' gender, age, marital status, and employment status (both recoded into binary variables indicating being married (or in a civil partnership) and employed, respectively), education level (three categories roughly representing primary, secondary, and tertiary education in each country) and income (three levels of relative income within each country-year). While this does not approach causal identification, we do this to account for various likely sources of demographic confounders, to develop a clearer picture of the relationship between trust judgments and engagement.[10] In this section, we present plots for the marginal change in the predicted probability of falling into the engagement category of each variable, by each category of each trust variable.

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[8] This data includes measures of trust from nine hybrid regimes and non-democracies fielded with funding from the UK Economic and Social Research Council-sponsored (ref: ES/S009809/1) "TrustGov" research project in 2020.

[9] Estimating models with fixed effects does not change the results substantively.

Firstly, Figure 43.4 shows a strong relationship between trust in most institutions and the likelihood of respondents in free countries saying they "always" vote in national elections. This applies most strongly to trust in parliament and the civil service but there is little difference between the different measures of institutional trust, and the only insignificant effects are for those who say they have "not very much" trust in government and the courts (as opposed to "none at all"). Notably, the confidence interval for having "a great deal" of trust in political parties is widest, likely reflecting the fact that only 1.4 percent of respondents in free countries chose that response. In Figure 43.5, we see that all of these relationships are significant in non-liberal democracies, but they are weaker in almost all instances. Interestingly, the difference between reporting "a great deal" of trust and "quite a lot" of trust is generally substantially larger than the (mostly insignificant) differences between "quite a lot" and "not very much" trust—which may reflect a difference between the general effects of trust and a more distinct group of citizens that are fully allegiant to their regime.

Together, these results show that the positive relationship between trust and voting that we observed at the aggregate level is clearly replicated at the individual level, controlling for various factors. In short, widespread disengagement from voting should indeed raise red flags about citizens' trust in their political systems. In terms of the substantive sizes of these effects, those who report "a great deal" of trust in parliament in liberal democracies are predicted to be about 14 percentage points more likely to "always" vote than those who report "none at all," and in other regimes the difference is only slightly less, at about 12 percentage points.

Turning to the probability of reporting participation in demonstrations, Figure 43.6 shows that trust in political parties and the civil service has no significant effects on it in free countries, and trust in parliament and the courts has only marginally negative effects. However, trust in the government and the police has a substantial negative effect which is largest for the most trusting citizens. This appears to logically reflect respondents distinguishing between different institutions in their trust judgments, as "the government" can reasonably be thought to refer more specifically to the incumbent government than the other, more diffuse institutions of the state, and the police is often directly involved in citizen demonstrations. Interestingly, the relationship between trust in parliament and demonstrations among free countries was positive at the aggregate level but is marginally negative here. This suggests that among liberal democracies, societies with higher levels of trust in parliament share other features which are conducive to engagement, whereas

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[10] We do not include the survey weights provided by WVS here as they are only available for 53.5 percent of respondents and for 34 of 67 countries. These weights were produced at the discretion of each country (World Values Survey 2020a) so we are wary of their consistency and instead include demographic controls to account for sampling bias, but including them in our models has little impact on the results (mainly widening the confidence intervals of some effects).

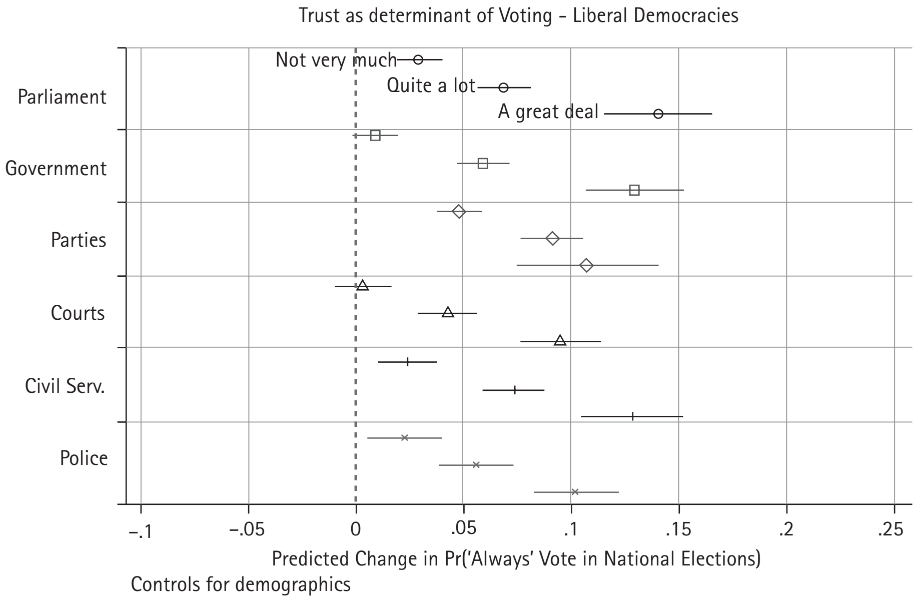

FIGURE 43.4 Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Voting by Trust in Various Institutions, from Multilevel Regression Models of Self-Reported Voting Propensity in "Free" Countries (Using the Classification from Freedom House) in the 7th Wave of the WVS/EVS, Controlling for Demographics

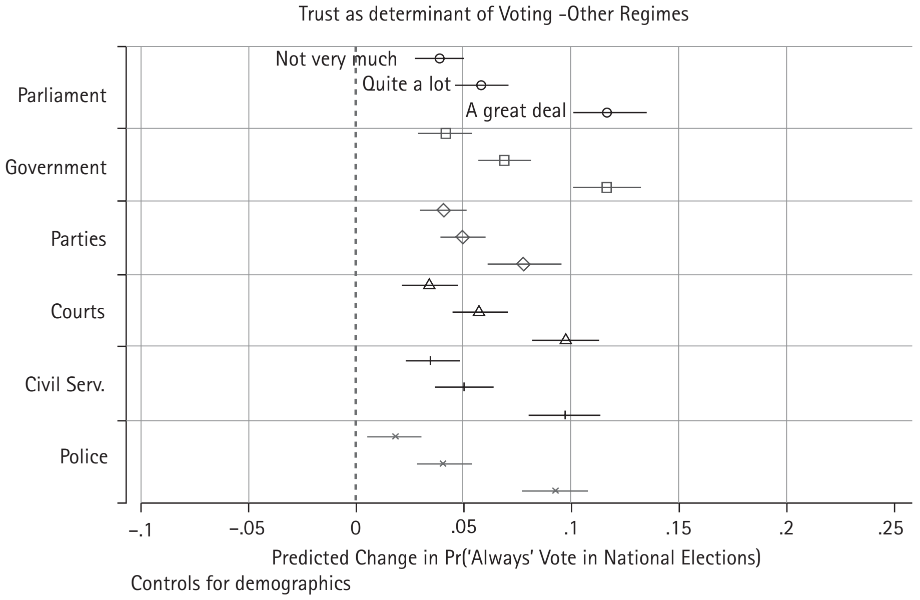

FIGURE 43.5 Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Voting by Trust in Various Institutions, from Multilevel Regression Models of Self-Reported Voting Propensity in "Not" and "Partly" Free Countries in the 7th Wave of the WVS/EVS, Controlling for Demographics

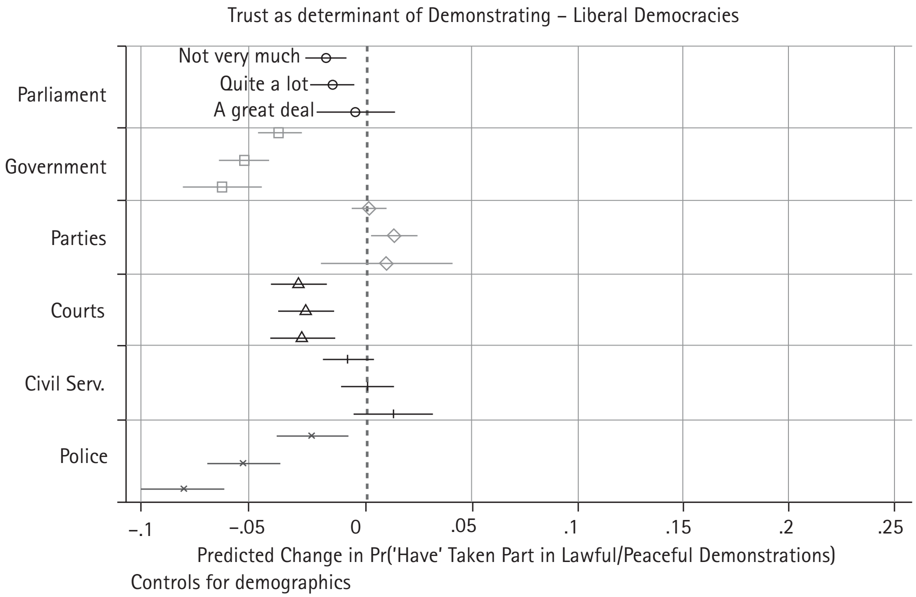

FIGURE 43.6 Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Demonstrating by Trust in Various Institutions, from Multilevel Regression Models of Self-Reported Demonstration Participation in "Free" Countries in the 7th Wave of the WVS/EVS, Controlling for Demographics

those trust judgments do not appear to be a driver of engagement at the individual level within these countries.

Figure 43.7 shows that these relationships are much more similar between institutions in autocratic countries, and here trust in parliament has a mostly negative relationship with demonstration participation, perhaps reflecting the tight grip of autocratic authorities over most or all state institutions. Interestingly, those who report "a great deal" of trust in non-liberal democracies do not appear any less likely to have demonstrated than the least trusting, however. We can only speculate on the reasons for this, but again this group of citizens might be those who are most allegiant to their regime and thus more likely to take part in demonstrations in *support* of it (see e.g., Jayasuriya and Rodan 2007).

Nevertheless, overall these results suggest that less trusting citizens are in fact more likely than the more trusting ones to engage in protest activities, so the trust implications of disengagement from those activities are quite different from the implications of disengagement from the formal electoral process. This result is true across the board in more autocratic countries, but in full democracies citizens appear to distinguish between different institutions and there, it is primarily lack of trust in *government* which appears to drive protest engagement. In all cases, these relationships are weaker than that between trust and voting, however, with those most trusting in government predicted to be about 6 percentage points less likely than the least trusting to take part in protests in democracies. In non-liberal democracies, those who report "quite a lot" of trust are about 3 percentage points less likely to have demonstrated than those who report none at all.

Finally, Figures 43.8 and 43.9 reveal strong positive relationships between political interest and trust in all institutions and here, the strength of effects is generally similar between the

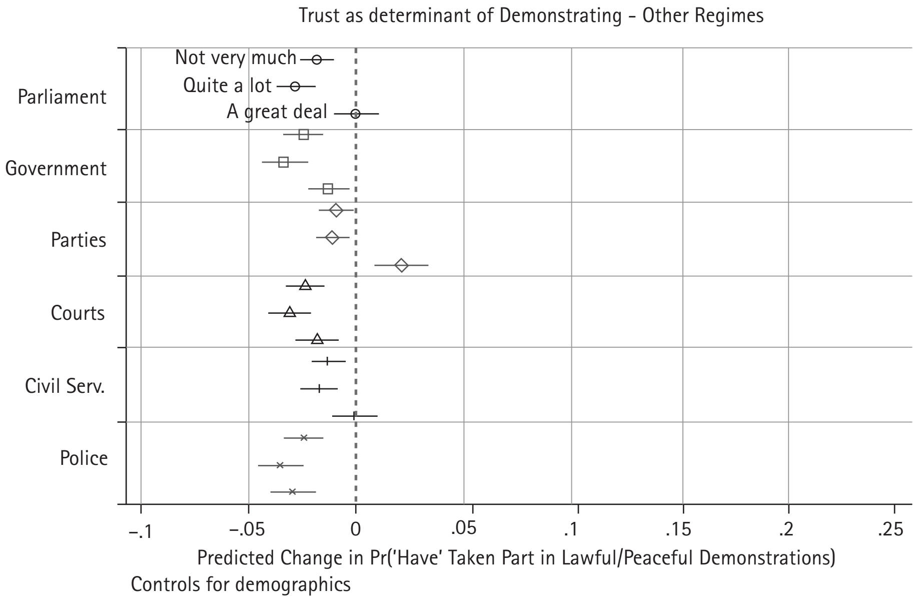

FIGURE 43.7 Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Demonstrating by Trust in Various Institutions, from Multilevel Regression Models of Self-Reported Demonstration Participation in "Not" and "Partly" Free Countries in the 7th Wave of the WVS/EVS, Controlling for Demographics

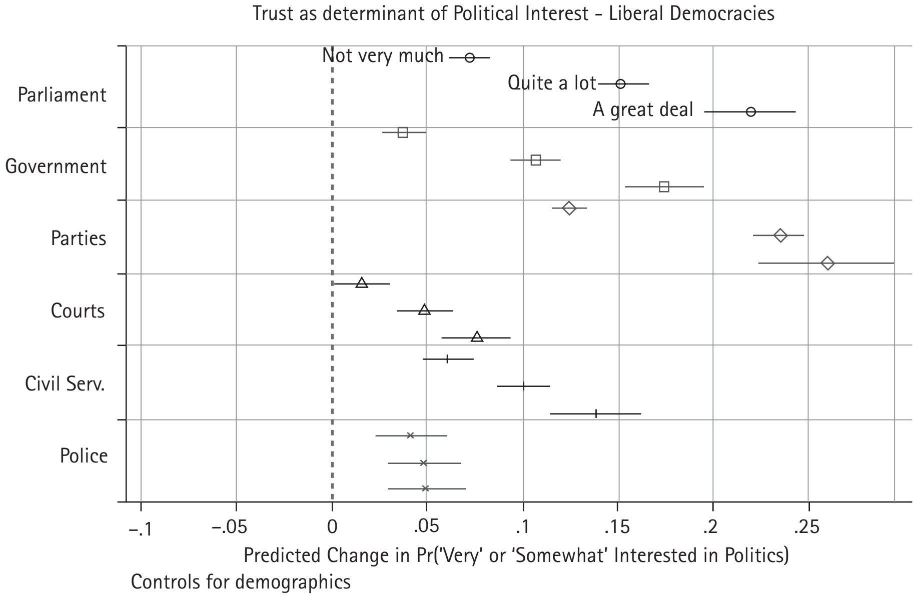

FIGURE 43.8 Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Political Interest by Trust in Various Institutions, from Multilevel Regression Models of Self-Reported Political Interest in "Free" Countries in the 7th Wave of the WVS/EVS, Controlling for Demographics

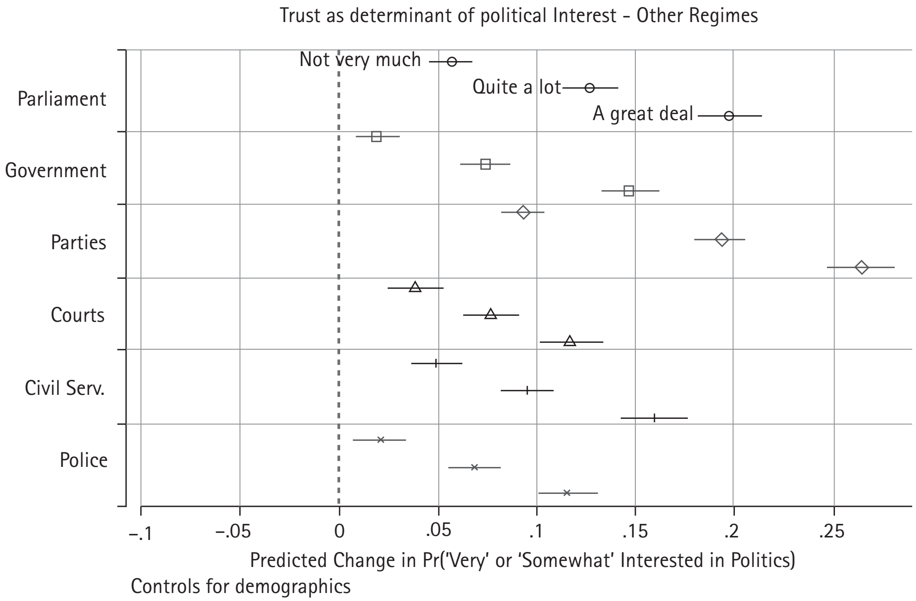

FIGURE 43.9 Changes in Predicted Probabilities of Political Interest by Trust in Various Institutions, from Multilevel Regression Models of Self-Reported Political Interest in "Not" and "Partly" Free Countries in the 7th Wave of the WVS/EVS, Controlling for Demographics

free and non-free groups of countries. However, it is again notable that respondents in free countries appear to differentiate more between institutions, as trust in courts and the police has a weaker relationship with political interest there, whereas the patterns are very similar across institutions in unfree countries. The relationships uncovered here are some of the strongest in our analysis, with those most trusting in political parties predicted to be about 25 percentage points more likely to be interested in politics in both democracies and non-liberal democracies, and for trust in parliament the difference is around 20 percentage points. This is consistent with results on the aggregate level: less trusting citizens are considerably less likely to be interested in politics in both regime types and thus, while a minority of untrusting citizens is more likely to engage in protests, on the whole low or declining levels of trust go together with low or declining levels of cognitive engagement in the overall electorate, instead of signaling a more actively critical, "monitorial" citizenry.

CONCLUSION

Political engagement has been considered integral to good citizenship since antiquity and in the modern era, widespread citizen engagement is also seen as a crucial prerequisite for a healthy democracy, fostering a vibrant civil society and legitimate, effective democratic government. However, political researchers and commentators have in recent times increasingly voiced concerns over growing citizen disengagement from politics—especially from the traditional avenues of elections and political parties dominant in liberal democracies.

On the basis of those concerns, many proclaim that we are witnessing a "crisis of democracy" and that these trends signal that citizens are losing support for their political systems. In this chapter, we have explored this assumption empirically, by analyzing the relationship between political engagement and political trust, highlighting how it is likely to be different depending both on the type of engagement and the political regime in question.

Our analysis does support the idea that disengagement signals distrust when it comes to voting: whether in liberal democracies or other regimes, the less trusting are less likely to vote, and countries with lower levels of turnout also tend to have lower levels of public support in their legislature. The same applies to cognitive disengagement: the less trusting are generally less interested in politics, a relationship which is substantive on both the aggregate and individual levels, in liberal democracies as well as in other regimes.

However, when it comes to extra-institutional behavioral engagement, the picture that emerges is more nuanced. On the aggregate level, there was a marginally positive relationship between trust in parliament and participation in demonstrations among liberal democracies, but this relationship was clearly negative among other regimes. However, when moving to the individual level and looking at measures of trust in other state institutions, the relationship was negative in both types of regimes. This finding may well be because more trusting societies share other qualities which are conducive to engagement, even if trust is itself not a positive driver of extra-institutional engagement. Similarly, we must note that since we controlled for demographic factors such as education and income in our models, it may well be that some demographic groups are both less trusting and more likely to protest in non-liberal democracies, but that our models (which aim to get closer to a purely attitudinal relationship) conceal those dynamics, which are apparent at the aggregate level.[11]

Therefore, our aggregate findings suggest that when we observe disengagement in a liberal democracy, it is likely an indication of lower levels of political trust in that society, and levels of extra-institutional engagement are not likely to compensate. In other regimes, however, levels of extra-institutional engagement actually tend to *rise* with lower levels of trust: highlighting the importance of paying attention to the regime context when interpreting political disengagement and providing some hopes for change catalyzed by the people in non-liberal regimes. When attempting to isolate the *effect* of trust on engagement by accounting for demographic and country effects on the individual level (acknowledging that our observational data cannot establish causality and the causal mechanisms are likely to work in both directions), however, we find that people are mostly the same regardless of regime type: more likely to vote if they trust their parliament and other state institutions, but more likely to protest if they lack trust in their government.

Another expectation that we had was that the general relationships between *behavioral* disengagement and trust might be weaker outside liberal democracies, because these countries afford rights and protections to their citizens which other regimes do not (or offer to a lesser extent). This expectation was supported on the individual level, where trust judgments generally seemed to be a weaker *driver* of behavioral engagement, but it did not apply to cognitive engagement (in line with our expectation) or on the aggregate level. Similarly, the effects of trust in different political and civil institutions on engagement appeared to be more diverse in liberal democracies and more uniform in other regimes, which suggests that citizens in democracies distinguish more between different state institutions than citizens in non-liberal democracies, who perhaps tend to treat different institutions simply as different faces of the same autocratic rulers. This may speak to theories of trust as a *relational* concept: that political trust is about whether "A trusts B to do X" and that the identity of B makes an important difference (Hardin 1992, 2006; Van der Meer 2010).

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[11] In fact, dropping demographic controls from the models suggest that the relationship between trust in government and demonstration participation is strong and negative in both regimes, and for "not very much" and "quite a lot" of trust, the effect is stronger in non-liberal democracies—though the effect for "a great deal" of trust is still considerably weaker for some reason.

Therefore, it might also be worthwhile to consider which X we are referring to: do citizens trust government... to do what? To tell the truth? To serve our interests, to lower taxes, to protect us from a pandemic...? Would we get the same answers to these different questions and if not, how might that make a difference when we speak about the role of trust and its relationship with disengagement and other important political variables? Thus, our analysis provides an important foundation for how to understand different types of political disengagement and their relationship with political trust in a global perspective, but future research would do well to distinguish between trust in the activities that we expect of different state actors. It would also be worthwhile to explore the different types of trust judgments that we make: does lack of explicit trust have the same effect as active *distrust*, and does a more skeptical and cautious *mistrust* play a distinct role (Bertsou 2019; Devine et al. 2020)?

To understand the normative implications of our findings we also need a clearer understanding of whether and where these different types of political trust and engagement have in fact been declining—and to what extent those declines may be generational and therefore likely to exacerbate in coming years—as there is still considerable empirical disagreement on all counts (Citrin and Stoker 2018; Dalton 2017; Grasso 2016; Norris 2011; Zmerli and Van der Meer 2017). While our analysis clarifies the general relationship between trust and disengagement, interpreting them requires us to also understand how both have been changing over time and to what extent younger generations of citizens engage and trust in different ways. This will help us put current levels of engagement and trust in a particular society into perspective, and enable us to make more informed normative judgments about political disengagement and what it says about the state of democracy.

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CHAPTER 44

COSTLY ABSTENTION

S. ERDEM AYTAÇ AND SUSAN C. STOKES

Ask a person why she takes part in collective political action—why she votes, joins demonstrations, or engages in other mass acts—and she will frequently explain that she cares a lot about the outcome. If the topic is voting, she is likely to mention the stakes in the outcome: if the wrong candidate or party wins, policy will go in the wrong direction, people with the wrong values or beliefs may be put in place in the bureaucracy or the courts, perhaps the country's future will go off the rails. Ask people why they take part in protests, and they are just as likely to mention the state of the world they wish to influence or alter: they want to push back against the government's price hikes, or electoral misconduct, or corruption, for example.

What if we imagine asking people who do not participate—who abstain from elections or stay away from protests—why they stay away. Those abstaining in an election might mention practical concerns, such as the time required to go to the polls. Those staying away from protests might mention the time and effort required to get to the site of protests. Or they might mention their fears of violence on the part of demonstrators or the police. Those staying home, in both elections and protests, might also mention the objectives of participation: they might say they do not really care who wins the election or they do not share the objectives of protesters.

These explanations appear fairly intuitive. However, inherited social-science theories of collective action have difficulty making sense of them. This is because the *goals* of participation in politics are public goods. A person will benefit from the public good (or suffer from the public bad) whether or not she took part in bringing them about. And her participation is unlikely to make the difference between the good being brought about or not. Her vote, or her voice in protest, is but a drop in the bucket. One more vote will not change the outcome of an election; one more protester will not produce the outcome sought by activists.

The problem is well illustrated by an early, influential model introduced by William Riker and Peter Ordeshook (1968). They posited that the *R̲ewards* of taking part in collective action are a function of the *p̲robability* of a single person's vote changing the outcome of the collective action, the *B̲enefits* of the desired result being attained, and the *C̲osts* of taking part, as in the following equation:

$$R = p(B) - C \tag{1}$$

We know that the probability of a person breaking a tie in a mass election or being the one additional protester who (say) forces the government to concede is exceedingly small (see, e.g., Gelman, Silver, and Edlin 2012). Therefore, the magnitude of *p* approaches zero. It follows that in the Riker-Ordeshook model the term *p(B)* approaches zero as well. Since the costs of participation are greater than zero, the right-hand side of the equation will never be in the positive territory. No one should bother taking part.

However, we regularly observe people taking part in elections and protests, and thus a large number of solutions to this "paradox of collective action" have been proposed. People might experience in-process benefits from participation—it might make them feel good to vote or to demonstrate (Schuessler 2000a, 2000b). They might anticipate social shame if they stay home (Gerber, Green, and Larimer 2008). They might act to minimize the likelihood of feeling regret if the outcome is bad (Ferejohn and Fiorina 1974). Or they might experience a sense of duty, to their group or party (Feddersen 2004), or to their larger community. Indeed, Riker and Ordeshook's (1968) solution to the paradox of voting was to posit that people feel a sense of citizen duty to take part (though this idea applies more readily to voting than to protesting). Adding *Duty* to the theory, they reformulated their equation thus:

$$R = p(B) - C + D \tag{2}$$

These solutions are sensible and there is some empirical evidence to support each one. Yet together they leave a puzzle unsolved: why do the benefits of collective action figure so large in people's explanations for why they take part?

In addition, there a several other anomalies that these accounts leave unexplained. One has to do with the impact of rising costs of participation—*C* in the equation—on participation rates. Recall that the relationship should be a negative one: the costs of participation rise and participation falls. However, sometimes this expectation is violated by reality. In the United States, after a 2013 Supreme Court decision, previously highly regulated Southern states were freed from regulations and were able to impose strict voter ID laws. The expectation of some and fear of others was that these laws, by in effect increasing the costs of participation, would depress turnout, in particular of African American voters against whom the laws seemed to be aimed. But the research did not bear out the dire predictions, and turnout did not obviously fall in Black communities in the states in question (Valentino and Neuner 2017).

Likewise, the phenomenon of "backlash protests" seems to work against the logic of the Riker-Ordeshook model. When the police repress protests harshly, when they use water cannons and tear gas and batons against them, they drive up the costs of participation. Nevertheless, instead of quelling the protests, in a backlash dynamic they spread—sometimes spectacularly (Davenport 2007; Francisco 1995; Opp 1994). In recent years, heavy-handed police responses to protests from Chile to Ukraine, from Turkey to Brazil, from Egypt to the US have led, not to the quelling of protests, but to their explosion, with many erstwhile bystanders joining their roughed-up compatriots.

Hence, standard models of collective action in politics leave many puzzles unexplained and anomalies in place (also see Chapter 8 in this volume). In addition, they leave out an important emotional component. The image of the citizen coldly weighing costs against benefits is not entirely unreasonable, but it is clearly an abstraction from the subjective experiences of many people when they contemplate political participation. When activists or politicians attempt to get people to act, they are as likely to make emotional appeals—to stoke anger or fear or hopefulness—as they are to focus on potential costs and benefits of participation.

COSTLY ABSTENTION AS A DRIVER OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Another way to think about people's decision whether to take part in collective political action or stay home is that they experience both *costs of participation* and *costs of abstention* (Aytaç and Stokes 2019). Costs of participation are much like those enumerated by theorists like Riker and Ordeshook (1968): they include the material resources and time needed to get oneself to the location of action, be it a voting booth or protest venue. They also include cognitive costs required to decide which candidate one prefers or whether one agrees or disagrees with the protest in question.

What are the costs of abstention? They are the psychic and social friction or disutility a person experiences when she cares about the outcome of collective action but anticipates staying away. Costs of abstention can be purely internal, not relying on any other person knowing about whether or not one took part. Think about the following example. Imagine that you are worried about environmental pollution and global warming. You have a large amount of household waste that could be recycled. However, recycling in this case entails a lot of time-consuming effort: you will need to break down boxes, clear food containers, and sort different kinds of paper. You are in a hurry and think about just sticking it all in the regular trash, headed for the landfill. And yet, an unpleasant feeling overtakes you—almost a feeling of physical discomfort. If the discomfort and unease are sufficient, you may take the time to recycle the items.

You may do so even knowing that your contribution to a clean environment is negligible. And you may do so even if you are by yourself, with no one watching, and do not anticipate having to confess your actions to your ecologically minded friends. This sense of discomfort and unease, linked to the experience or anticipation of an action that goes against an outcome that one wants to see achieved in the wider world, is what we mean by costs of abstention.

A simple modification of the Riker-Ordeshook (1968) model incorporates costs of abstention into the logic of collective action in electoral participation:

$$P = A - C + D_E \tag{3}$$

$$A = f(B[1+\gamma]),\ f'(\bullet) > 0 \tag{4}$$

Equation (3) posits that the rewards from participating (*P*) are equal to the costs of abstention (*A*)—the internalized, psychic friction experienced when someone does not take part—minus the costs of participation (*C*, material costs, time spent, etc.), plus the extrinsic, externalized social costs (D_E): the social costs of being observed not to behave in the publicly approved manner.

The costs of abstention, in turn, vary positively in magnitude with how much one cares about the outcome, B, and the perceived competitiveness of the election, γ (equation 4). Costs of abstention are low, say, if one anticipates staying away from the polls in an election that one sees as pitting two equivalent candidates against one another, in which case B will be very small. They grow much larger if one views one of the candidates as pursuing excellent policies and the other as pursuing catastrophic ones. Costs of abstention also mount in close races, though only for individuals who care about the outcome. This is reflected in equation (4) where the competitiveness of the election enters the equation for costs of abstention through an interaction with B.

We have been discussing how costs of abstention and participation interact to shape people's decisions whether or not to vote. A slightly modified model can help explain their decisions whether to take part in demonstrations. Consider the following system of equations:

$$P = A - C + D_E \tag{5}$$

$$A = f\left(B\left[1 + N + R\right]\right), f'(\bullet) > 0 \tag{6}$$

$$C = c + R^2 / N \tag{7}$$

Equation (5) again posits that a person's rewards from participation rise with the internalized (A) and social (D_E) costs of abstention and decline with the material and cognitive costs of participation (C). The costs of abstention are depicted in equation (6) as rising with the relative benefits of seeing one's preferred outcome materialize (B), as well as with the *Numbers* of fellow demonstrators and the level of *Repression* inflicted on protesters. The mobilizing effect of N is similar to the effect of the closeness of election (γ) in the context of electoral participation. And repression can increase costs of abstention because individuals who are sympathetic to protesters may experience empathetic anger and moral outrage upon witnessing them repressed (Aytaç, Schiumerini, and Stokes 2018; della Porta 2013). These latter two factors—Numbers and Repression—operate in an interactive way with relative benefits. If a person is unmoved by the goal of protests, her costs of abstention will remain low even if she anticipates many other people joining demonstrations (large N) or the prospects of police abuse being high (large R).

Costs of participation, in turn, rise with the material costs we have considered earlier—for example time and money required to get to the rallying locale, indexed with lower-case c—and with the per-participant level of repression, in an accelerating manner (equation 7). In this way we recognize the bifurcated effect of repression on individuals' likelihood of participation. Repression at low-to-medium levels can have a net mobilizing effect if the costs of abstention given in equation (6) overcome costs of participation. This feature of the model helps to make sense of why participation in protests can rise in the wake of repression. As repression intensifies, however, such as when there is a high likelihood of being jailed or injured, the cost of participation quickly increases, leading repression to exert a net demobilizing effect. The model's consideration of per-participant level of repression takes into account the frequently mentioned search for "safety in numbers" among demonstrators (Kuran 1991).

The mobilizing effect of repression seems to have been amplified in the age of social media. Many people have cell phones, and many cell phones have cameras. Therefore, the world is now full of amateur photojournalists, ready—and often trained—to capture footage of police abuses. Those images travel quickly to myriad individuals who already believe in the cause, and who can be pushed over the line from sympathetic bystander to impassioned participant by a photo or video clip documenting police abuse.

The impact of ready cell-phone images, social media, and moral outrage was also well illustrated to us in our research in Ukraine, shortly after the EuroMaidan protests that eventually led to the toppling of the Yanukovych government. The following is from an interview with Dmytro Bulatov, describing the morning, in early December 2013, when he began a group that offered car service for people wanting to travel to and from the protests. Bulatov recalled viewing a friend's Facebook post, showing a picture the friend had taken with his cell phone camera on the Maidan, early in the morning, after an unexpected attack by a special police unit, the Berkut, against remnants of the previous day's protest against Yanukovych (quoted in Aytaç and Stokes 2019):

> The police were attempting to take this girl toward a police vehicle, whereas [my friend] tried to rescue her from the police and take her toward an ambulance because she was beaten and covered in blood. Only then I turned on the television, opened the Internet, and speaking honestly and plainly, *I became enraged*. You know, there are sometimes moments when *you feel like you are coming apart because it is no longer possible to tolerate the situation*. We phoned some friends to tell them that we have to put together a car protest.

Bulatov's language conveys powerfully the notion of costly abstention: of a highly emotional, almost physically painful response to a morally repugnant action, an image that traveled from cell phone through social media and sparked the recipient—already opposed to the government, but not yet active—not just to join the protests but to form an organization in their support.

EVIDENCE FOR THE COSTLY ABSTENTION THEORY OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Earlier we noted that in the contexts of both elections and protests, costs of abstention are positively related to individuals' differential utilities over outcomes (B). For individuals with high B, costs of abstention rise with the competitiveness of an election, the expected or actual size of protests, and the level of repression protesters face. Moreover, both would-be-voters' and would-be-protesters' emotional responses can amplify or moderate their costs of abstention. Therefore, in the following we provide evidence, both observational and experimental, that focus on the relationships between these factors and electoral and protest participation.

Costly Abstention and Electoral Participation

The main observable implication of costly abstention being a driver of electoral participation is that turnout should be positively related to the importance people assign to the outcome of the election, especially when the contest is also close-run. Crucially, these effects should not be observed just because of the elites' mobilization efforts or individuals' social pressure concerns. In addition to any such "extrinsic" considerations, we should also be able to detect an "intrinsic" motivation leading people to participate in certain elections because their costs of abstention are high.

First, we focus on the evidence for *B*, individuals' differential utilities over outcomes, playing an important role in bringing people to the polls. Several aggregate patterns related to turnout support this conjecture. On average, turnout levels are higher in national elections around the world than in regional or local ones and when the office being filled is for the head of government rather than for the legislature (Blais 2000, 2006; Przeworski 2009). In the US for example, there is a dramatic difference in turnout between presidential and mid-term congressional elections; between 1960 and 2018, turnout is about 18 percentage points higher, on average, in presidential election years than in mid-term elections.

Turnout tends to be higher in polarized settings as well, where people view the stakes of elections as high (Franklin 2004). Several scholars of American politics argue that increased ideological polarization of US parties in the 2000s explains rising turnout, at least in presidential elections (Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Hetherington 2008). We find suggestive evidence of a polarization–turnout connection beyond the US as well. The Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) assigns to each party in elections in more than 50 countries a score on the Left–Right scale as a summary indicator of policy positions. Using these data, we calculated the difference in Left–Right position scores between the two parties with the largest vote shares in 480 elections with non-compulsory voting in 49 countries between 1945 and 2013. This distance between party positions is a statistically significant predictor ($p<0.01$) for turnout: A one-standard-deviation increase in the policy distance between parties (19 points on a [-100,100] scale) increases turnout by one-fifth of a standard deviation (2.7 percentage points).

The institutional characteristics of polities also influence turnout, in directions that highlight the relevance of *B*—the term denoting the utility a person will enjoy if her preferred outcome is realized. Jackman (1987), for instance, reports that while unicameralism has a positive effect on turnout, the number of political parties exert a negative influence. He argues that we observe these effects because such institutional features "influence the degree to which potential voters think their vote will make a difference both to the election outcome itself and to the subsequent formation of a government" (p. 407). Similarly, Blais (2000) and Tavits (2009) find that turnout is lower in settings where parliamentary elections are considered as less decisive for choosing the executive (e.g., when there are direct presidential elections).

A rival interpretation of these patterns is that, in high-stakes elections, parties and candidates work harder to mobilize would-be voters. However, to the extent that scholars are able to distinguish the level of the office being filled from parties' mobilization efforts as factors increasing turnout, the effect of mobilization efforts pales in comparison to that of high-office elections. For example, while presidential candidates in the US typically focus their mobilization efforts in a few highly contested states, turnout in such states is on average just two percentage points higher than in other states in elections from 1980 to 2008 (Gerber et al. 2009). During the same period, the difference in turnout between presidential and midterm congressional elections was eight times larger, at 16 percentage points.

Observational analyses of survey data also point to the relevance of individuals' perceptions of the stakes of elections for their likelihood of participation. In the US, individuals who reported caring a great deal about which party wins or displaying strong affect for a candidate or party had significantly greater probability of turning out in elections than other voters (Abramowitz and Saunders 2008). In contrast, American citizens who are more ambivalent about the candidates are less likely to vote (Mutz 2002). A similar dynamic has been observed in British elections as well (Whiteley et al. 2013).

In addition to this mobilizing effect of *B*, we also observe a "close-election" effect in most democracies—the smaller the margin of victory for the winner, the higher the turnout rate (Blais 2000; Cox and Munger 1989). A rather naïve explanation for this pattern is that people significantly overestimate the probability that their vote will be pivotal (and hence determine the election outcome) when the race is close. However, available evidence shows that large majorities of individuals are aware that the probability of casting a decisive vote in a large election is very small (Aytaç and Stokes 2019; Blais 2000).

In a series of vignette experiments reported in Aytaç and Stokes (2019), we confirmed the causal effects of individuals' differential utilities over outcomes (*B*) and the competitiveness of the election on individuals' electoral participation decisions, and also provided evidence for the causal mechanism we propose—heightened costs of abstention—behind these effects. These experiments were embedded in surveys with respondents recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk platform.

In the experiments we presented participants with hypothetical election scenarios and asked about how they would behave and how they would perceive the elections. In one experiment, we considered a hypothetical US gubernatorial election and experimentally manipulated its importance and competitiveness in isolation from potential confounding effects (e.g., media coverage, party mobilization). We manipulated the election's importance by highlighting the powerful capacities of governors, and that the respondent should assume that he or she has a clear preference for one candidate over the other. Subsequent analyses showed that this manipulation of *B* worked as intended: respondents in the treatment groups where we tried to instill a sense of importance indeed viewed gubernatorial elections in their state as more important. We manipulated the closeness of the election by referring to "reliable polls" that indicated that the race was either very close or very lopsided.

The outcome of interest was respondents' stated likelihood of voting in these hypothetical scenarios where we attributed some costs to voting so as not to make the participants' turnout decisions trivial. Respondents expressed greater willingness to vote when they perceived an election important regardless of its competitiveness. Their willingness to vote also increased when they were told that the expected outcome of the election was close, but this effect was observed only if they perceived the election's outcome as important.

While these results are in line with the observable implications of the costly abstention theory of participation, they do not speak to the theoretical mechanism we propose. Our core theoretical conjecture is that individuals experience unpleasant psychic tensions (high costs of abstention) when they are unable to participate (or anticipate not being able participate) in an election that they care about. These tensions further increase if the race is close. And the desire to avoid these tensions is an important motivator for electoral participation.

To test this mechanism, we conducted a follow-up vignette experiment. Recall that the outcome question of the previous experiment was individual's (self-declared) likelihood of voting in different hypothetical election scenarios where we had manipulated the importance and competitiveness of the election. The follow-up experiment was implemented immediately after this question with the same participants. We randomly assigned participants into different groups, and in each group we asked them to imagine that they were unable to vote in the hypothetical election described earlier due to unforeseen circumstances. In some treatment groups we added additional statements that the participant would meet with friends or neighbors after the election and their nonparticipation would be discussed. In this way, we were able to ascertain effects of exogenously imposed hypothetical abstention and whether any effects we observed were driven primarily by extrinsic social pressure considerations people might anticipate if they abstained.

The outcome of interest in this experiment was a measure of unpleasant psychic tensions that people might experience upon anticipating abstention. For this purpose, we utilized the concept of *negative affect* in psychology, which is defined as "a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states" (Watson et al. 1988: 1063). The mood states making up negative affect could be conceived as being intrinsic or extrinsic in nature; the former includes anger, distress, and nervousness while emotions like guilt and shame are linked to extrinsic negative affect. In the experiment we were primarily interested in whether induced abstention in important elections leads individuals to experience mood states like anger and distress which are related to intrinsic costs of abstention as we conceive them.

To measure the relevant mood states for negative affect, we used an abbreviated Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) by asking respondents to tell us to what extent they would imagine themselves feeling a number of emotions after the hypothetical Election Day described (in which they were unable to vote). We measured seven mood states that were relevant for intrinsic as well as extrinsic dimensions of negative affect: distressed, upset, guilty, ashamed, nervous, afraid, and angry. Respondents gave their answers on a scale with labels *very slightly or not at all*, *a little*, *moderately*, *quite a bit*, and *very much*.

The results of the experiment showed that participants reported significantly higher levels of negative affect—emotions like distress, anger, nervousness, and guilt—when anticipating not voting in an important election than in an unimportant one. Moreover, the negative affect emotions instigated by exogenously imposed abstention was amplified in important election scenarios when the election outcome was also close. We found no evidence that the abstention-related negative affect was driven primarily by extrinsic, social considerations: we did not observe higher levels of negative affect in treatments where we asked participants to imagine reporting their absence from the polls to neighbors or friends.

The intrinsic and psychological nature of costs of abstention allows us to make sense of patterns of electoral participation where explanations that rest on purely cognitive considerations fall short. One example in this direction is the turnout patterns of the unemployed. In a seminal study investigating the relationship between economic adversity and voter turnout, Rosenstone (1982) focused on the 1974 US national election and observed that unemployed Americans voted at lower rates than did the employed in this election.

Curiously, however, the abstention rates of those who had been long unemployed by the time of the election were considerably lower than those who had recently lost their jobs. Rosenstone explained these patterns by different levels of opportunity costs: the unemployed faced higher opportunity costs of participation in politics than the employed because they are better off spending their time to address their unemployment problem. And the negative effect of unemployment on turnout dissipates over time because individuals adapt to their situation and the "displacement of other concerns, such as politics, declines" (p. 36).

Some further observations cast doubt on opportunity costs as fully explaining these patterns, however. First, time-use surveys of unemployed Americans do not suggest that they are short of free time; on the contrary, they spend more time on activities like watching television or sleeping than the employed do (Krueger and Mueller 2012). Second, when we broaden the analysis to a long series of elections instead of just focusing on one election, we see that the longer-term unemployed individuals' propensity to vote bounces back only in elections that coincide with periods of high unemployment rates (Aytaç, Rau, and Stokes 2020). Varying levels of opportunity costs cannot account for why we observe this pattern in some specific elections only.

We argue that the psychological effects of unemployment and politicians' strategic discourse provide a better explanation for why the turnout of the long-term unemployed gets closer to that of the employed in contexts of high unemployment (Aytaç, Rau, and Stokes 2020). When unemployment is high, opposition candidates have incentives to politicize it and blame the incumbent. This discourse elicits anger, an approach emotion, among the unemployed, increasing their costs of abstention and thus making them more likely to participate. In elections with low unemployment, campaigns tend to ignore the problem of unemployment, and therefore we do not observe such a mobilizing effect.

We provide evidence for this dynamic from different angles. Drawing on large-scale surveys in the US covering elections over a forty-year period (1974 to 2014), we find that the bounce-back of the unemployed is observed only in elections that coincide with recessions and high unemployment rates. We also show that opposition presidential candidates in the United States spend more time in speeches talking about unemployment when the rate is high. And an original survey experiment conducted among unemployed Americans shows that a political rhetoric blaming the government for high levels of unemployment does indeed elicit anger among the unemployed and heightens their willingness to vote. These results again point to the power of emotional costs and dissonances to bring people to the polls.

Costly Abstention and Protest Participation

As discussed earlier, when applied to protest participation, the costs of abstention are positively related to individuals' differential utilities over protest outcomes (*B*): individuals who care about the protest's goals will bear higher costs of abstention, and thus will be more likely to join the protests. In addition, for individuals who care about the protest's goals ($B>0$), large (expected or actual) protests and police repression drive up costs of abstention. To probe the validity of these propositions, we draw on original research as well as secondary data sources focusing on three recent social movements in Istanbul (Turkey), São Paulo (Brazil), and Kiev (Ukraine) to offer supporting evidence for the mobilizing effects of each of these three factors (Aytaç and Stokes 2019). We also explore how individuals' emotional responses can amplify their costs of abstention by focusing on police repression of protesters (Aytaç, Schiumerini, and Stokes 2018).

Turkey, Brazil, and Ukraine witnessed large-scale protest movements in 2013 that provided a good opportunity to study dynamics of protest participation.[1] In separate surveys of exclusively of protesters and of the general public in Istanbul, São Paulo, and Kiev, respondents' agreement with the immediate goals of the three protest movements emerged as a key factor in protest participation. In the same surveys, police repression was offered as a significant reason for joining the protests as well. We corroborated these findings with fieldwork that involved open-ended interviews with protest participants, activists, and government officials in each of the three cities. The link between police repression and mobilization emerged in our qualitative findings as well, and a frequent theme in our interviews with protest participants and activists was expressions of anger and moral outrage. In particular, individuals who shared the movement's goals or who felt affinity with protesters (high B) said that they experienced empathetic anger upon witnessing protesters being repressed and could not just stand by and watch events unfolding—that is, their costs of abstention skyrocketed, which in turn led them to join demonstrations.

Since individuals do not always offer reliable reasons for their actions and due to the well-known threats to causal inference with observational data, in our research we also used experimental tools. In each of the three cities of protests, we deployed survey experiments where we randomly assigned respondents into different groups and asked them to imagine that the protest movements were again stirring. In the control group, we just asked respondents about their willingness to take part in the case of renewed protests. In treatment groups, we added additional vignettes that emphasized (i) the movement's main goals, (ii) that a large movement was already underway, or (iii) that police responded very aggressively to crowds that were protesting peacefully. We were interested in whether such additional information prompted more willingness to participate compared to control group respondents.

The experimental results broadly provide supportive evidence for our theoretical conjectures. When we reminded individuals of the movement's central goals, those who were more sympathetic to the opposition displayed increased willingness to join protests. The evidence for the effect of large crowds was more suggestive than decisive, but opposition supporters, and especially younger ones, on average were more likely to protest when large crowds in the streets were implied. Similarly, young opposition supporters in each case were more likely to say that they were willing to join protests when we highlighted police repression of protesters to them. The negative age effects we observe are compatible with the findings in the literature that young people are prone to protest and more risk-tolerant (McAdam 1986).

The mobilizing effect of rising costs of abstention can also help to explain patterns of protest participation that are at odds with a simple cost–benefits framework. In many protest movements around the world, including the three cases we considered earlier, police repression of protesters seems to mobilize bystanders and lead to larger protests rather than suppressing them. Such a "backlash mobilization" is puzzling from the perspective of mainstream theories of participation because police repression is essentially a significant increase in costs of participation, and thus should lead to fewer people participating in protests, ceteris paribus.

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[1] See Aytaç, Schiumerini, and Stokes (2017) for an overview of these protests and governments' responses.

Backlash mobilization is compatible with our costs of abstention approach. If we consider the emotional responses of individuals to repression in line with a social–psychological approach (della Porta 2013; Pearlman 2013), bystanders who see protests positively might feel empathetic anger and moral outrage upon seeing protesters being attacked by police. These approach emotions (Carver 2004) increase these individuals' costs of abstention, encouraging them to join protests. Of course, when repression is very intense, costs of participation can outweigh costs of abstention so that in such cases people would be more likely to stay home or leave the demonstration site. Therefore, the mobilizing effect of repression would be most visible at low-to-medium levels of repression.

To explore this social–psychological mechanism we propose, we conducted a survey experiment in Istanbul in 2015, more than a year after the Gezi Park protests.[2] We took advantage of the news that broke in late 2014 that the Municipality of Istanbul had allocated funds in its budget to renew the Gezi Park development project, which was the trigger of the original 2013 protests. Our research design relied on experimentally manipulating individuals' exposure to reminders of police repression at Gezi Park protests and measuring their emotional responses, views about the government, and willingness to join the demonstrations in the case of renewed protests.

The results of the experiment show that respondents who were reminded of police repression in the original protests (using a collage of photographs of police violence at Gezi protests accompanied by a descriptive text) expressed greater willingness to participate in future, renewed protests on average than respondents in control and placebo conditions.[3] This mobilizing effect of repression in the treatment group was driven by individuals who opposed the government, in line with our expectations. Moreover, these respondents also expressed higher levels of anger than control-group respondents upon being probed about their emotional responses. Formal mediation analysis reveals that anger was an effective mediator between repression and protest mobilization in the full sample and among opposition supporters.

The interplay of costs of participation and costs of abstention in people's choices to take part in protests are illustrated in protest dynamics in the 2019–2020 period. The prior year was the year of the protest. From Hong Kong to Bagdad, from Quito to Tehran, and from Paris to Beirut, and many other locations, hundreds of thousands of people took part in large, sustained demonstrations. The crescendo of street demonstrations probably reflected fundamental shifts in societies, such as increasing income inequality in much of the world, disappointment with democracy, or a "democratic deficit" in many regions. Moreover, the internet and social media made it easy for organizers to spread information about protests and lessened the information costs of potential demonstrators. Thus, the costs of participation fell, while at the same time the costs of abstention rose (Aytaç and Stokes 2020).

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[2] See Aytaç, Schiumerini, and Stokes (2018) for details about the experiment and analyses.

[3] Respondents in the control group were not presented with any reminders of violence at Gezi protests. To rule out the possibility that any differences between the treatment and the control groups were due to the presence of photographs in the treatment group rather than their content, the experiment also included a place group where respondents saw a postcard-like image of the Istanbul skyline at night.

But the situation changed abruptly with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, in early 2020. Suddenly, the world of protests went quiet. Fear of contagion, along with government lockdown orders—often accompanied by threats of fines for violators—proved more effective than police and security forces had often been in keeping people at home. As one observer noted about Chile, the pandemic achieved what the police had failed to do in the final months of 2019: get protesters off the streets and back into their homes (Alarcon 2020).

The pandemic's power to quiet a world in protests, suddenly in early 2020, is remarkable. But the fact that really highlights the lacunae of prior theorizing is the resurgence of protest in parts of the world, despite the pandemic. This occurred in several places. One was Hong Kong, where residents had been involved in what many viewed as an existential struggle to stave off authoritarian rule. The revival of protest in Hong Kong coincided with the announcement of a security law from Beijing that appeared to accelerate Hong Kong's loss of special status, and with the city's loss of control over the infection rate.

Less so in the United States. Much of the country had stopped still, or slowed substantially, in March–April 2020. At the end of May, a White police officer in Minneapolis slowly and painfully killed an unarmed Black man, George Floyd. The killing was observed by crowds and captured on cell-phone cameras, and quickly sailed over the social media. Almost immediately, and in dozens of cities around the country, protesters came out onto the streets. It was the beginning of the largest series of protests in US history. Between 15 million and 26 million people demonstrated, many of them repeatedly, over weeks and months.

We draw two lessons from these dynamics. One is that costs of participation are very real, and—if high enough—can tamp down protests on a global scale. The second is that costs of abstention can be so high that they harden participants even to significant risks of life and limb.

Implications of the Costly Abstention Theory of Political Participation

In conclusion, we would like to revisit how the idea of costly abstention overcomes some serious shortcomings of existing theories of political participation.

First, the costly abstention theory overcomes the problem of free-riding that bedevils many rational choice theories of collective action, including those of voting and protesting. This problem refers to the well-known observation that it is not clear why rational individuals should be willing to bear the costs of participation when they know that their contribution to the desired outcome is negligible, and they would reap any benefits whether they participate or not. In our theory, this is addressed by the idea that individuals bear psychic, subjective costs when they abstain in certain circumstances. The insight that abstention can be individually costly, just as participation, helps explain why engaging in collective political action could be quite rational from an individual point of view.

Second, prevailing theoretical frameworks imply that people's participation decisions should have little to do with how much they care about the potential outcomes of collective action. This assertion is obviously against intuition, and several real-world observations and academic studies (including our own) produce evidence highlighting the relevance of individuals' differential utilities over outcomes, what we call the *B*-effect, for political mobilization. In the costly abstention model, we theorize that individuals' costs of abstention are positively related to the subjective importance they attach to the outcome of collective action. In this way our theory is in line with basic intuitions about political participation and observable facts about the world.

Costly abstention also takes seriously the implications of human psychology for political participation. We argue and provide evidence that theories that rest on purely cognitive processes are likely to fall short of providing a satisfactory explanation for patterns we observe, like the backlash protests described earlier (Aytaç, Schiumerini, and Stokes 2018). Therefore, we explicitly recognize the emotional dimensions of collective action. In particular, approach emotions like anger and moral outrage can amplify individuals' costs of abstention and compel them to act, sometimes in the face of considerable danger.[4] Recognizing the role of emotions also allows us to better understand the strategies of political elites to mobilize or demobilize masses.

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[4] For a review of scholarly findings on the relevance of emotions in politics, see Brader and Marcus (2013). See also Chapter 9 in this volume.

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PART VIII

OUTCOMES

CHAPTER 45

MACRO-LEVEL EFFECTS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

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AND AUSTIN H. VO

What difference does mass political participation make? At the micro-level, political participation may shape identities, social networks, and psychological orientations. Through political participation, individuals may come to care more deeply about public issues, and politics may take on a more central component of one's personal identity (Passy and Monsch 2020). Participation may reinforce ties to others who share one's commitments and beliefs, and participation may bolster feelings of personal and collective efficacy (Corrigall-Brown 2011). At a societal level, mass political participation can have substantial consequences too, but theorizing and studying those effects is more challenging. There are many complex causal pathways of potential influence, and mass political participation is one of multiple factors that might explain why a major piece of legislation is adopted, how public opinion changes, and the way institutions form or change (Amenta, Andrews, and Caren 2019). We identify three main domains in which to gauge the potential effects of mass political participation: policy, culture, and institutions. We review theory and illustrative studies that seek to determine the potential effects of mass political participation as well as the mechanisms through which participation matters.

Modes of Mass Political Participation

We consider the most significant modes of mass political participation before turning to questions about the effects of political participation. We focus on three main forms—(1) voting and participation in institutional politics, (2) civic engagement and participation in associations, and (3) protest and participation in social movements—that have been central to theory and scholarship. These modes of participation may reinforce one another as, for example, when civic groups organize protests and mobilize voters for elections (Fisher 2019). However, modes of participation can also be distinguished and may be influenced by different explanatory factors (Brady, Verba, and Schlozman 1995; Giugni and Grasso 2019b; Grasso et al. 2019). Perhaps most important, each is associated with distinct research traditions and theoretical debates.

Voting is the most widely studied form of mass political participation. Modern democratic institutions emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and have been institutionalized throughout the globe. Rules governing participation in elections have shifted over time, and barriers related to social class, gender, and racial and ethnic groups have been contested through mass political participation. Mass participation through elections is critical to sustaining governing coalitions, and major realignments can spur significant changes in policy. Beyond voting, membership and participation in political parties is a central component of mass political participation based in conventional or institutional forms (Grasso 2016).

Civic engagement through associations and political organizations is critical for building and sustaining political identities, the aggregation of group interests, and the generation of political leadership. As such, there is a broad literature concerned with civic organizations and how they vary across time and place. Marion Fourcade and Evan Schofer (2016) conceptualize "routinized contention" using cross-national data on political participation to argue that voluntary-association participation does not operate independently from contentious politics across different states. Additionally, the broad scope of civic engagement allows some scholars to examine civic engagement even by those who are not citizens of a state or to examine engagement through a social movements and claims-making framework (Bloemraad 2017; Koopmans et al. 2005).

Finally, protest and social movements define a third mode of mass political behavior. In the contentious politics tradition, Tilly (1984) argues that movements emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries alongside modern states. As people came together to resist the intrusion of states into their lives, they also began to make claims on states for rights, protections, and social benefits. Thus, movements—or more precisely—the struggles between movements and state actors shaped the formation of policies, political culture, and institutions (Tilly 1992).

Voting occupies a central place in scholarship about mass political participation. However, there are many other forms of political behavior even in the electoral arena such as contributing to campaigns, lobbying officials, and attending political events. Numerous studies attempt to identify and explain these forms (Brady et al. 1995; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba and Nie 1987). Despite its multidimensionality, political participation is often categorized as either institutional or extra-institutional, and a similar distinction is sometimes made between participation rooted in civic organizations and associational life (Putnam 2000) or as forms of contentious politics (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). Although civic engagement often indicates networks of associational life and community involvement in civic and political groups, civic engagement spills over into other forms of participation including voting and contentious politics. Scholarship on many different cases and institutional settings reaches similar conclusions about the ways that electoral participation, civic engagement, and protest shape and often reinforce one another (Baumgartner and Mahoney 2005; Giugni and Grasso 2015, 2018; Skocpol and Fiorina 2004). In this chapter, we take a broad view by drawing on theory and scholarship within each of these traditions.

Policy Consequences

Whether and how mass political participation shapes policy is a central question in the study of politics and public policy. This question connects to longstanding debates in democratic theory regarding whether policy reflects the preferences and responds to the signals of citizens (Burstein and Linton 2002). Pluralist and neo-pluralist arguments emphasize the mechanisms that facilitate responsiveness to political behavior. From this perspective, elected officials are expected to pay attention to voter preferences to secure re-election. Thus, policies are expected to reflect the preferences of the most highly mobilized and vocal segments of society. Collectively, political parties aggregate and coordinate preferences in ways that may allow mass political behavior to shape policy. In addition, state agencies may be influenced by mass political behavior through elected officials or other routes such as direct lobbying. Interest groups, civic associations, and social movements may shape policy too by providing critical signals regarding issues of significant public concern or helping to circulate new ideas.

Significant obstacles limit the capacity of mass political behavior to shape policy. Although we focus on mechanisms of mass influence, it is important to consider and evaluate the degree and forms of mass influence alongside the relevant factors that limit it. Elite theorists argue that policymakers can safely ignore the preferences and demands of mass political participation. Alternatively, they highlight the degree to which economic elites and corporations drive core policy decisions (Bartels 2018). Institutionalists focus on mechanisms that ultimately minimize the efficacy of mass political participation (Gilens and Page 2014). State actors become insulated from sources of mass pressure (Skocpol, Evans, and Rueschemeyer 1985). Although some areas of state activity are of broad public concern, the size and complexity of modern states mean that large domains of policy go unnoticed on a mass scale (Burstein and Linton 2002). Finally, culturalist arguments focus on the ways that apathy and disengagement are manufactured leaving policymakers and the state actors that implement policy to operate with minimal oversight or opposition (Eliasoph 1998).

Despite barriers to influence, mass political action can shape policy areas in some cases or at selected points in time, and we focus on mechanisms associated with this influence (Amenta et al. 2019; Giugni and Grasso 2019a). We highlight core concepts related to the policy process. Most important, theorists have identified dimensions or stages of the policy process. The most important dimensions include agenda setting, the formation of policy proposals, the adoption of policy, and implementation (Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander 1995; Kingdon 1995). The important implication here is that different factors shape each of these dimensions or stages.

Agenda-setting refers to the prioritization of potential issues that are under consideration in the political arena. Scholars typically distinguish between the public agenda as reflected in the concerns of broad sectors of society and the formal agenda of decision makers. We expect mass political participation to have its most significant influence at this stage (Baumgartner and Mahoney 2005; Soule and King 2006). The news media may play a critical role in bringing attention to mass political behavior and the issues driving collective action (Walgrave and Vliegenthart 2012). Electoral campaigns are one mechanism through which mass preferences may get incorporated into the agendas of parties (Gillion 2020; Madestam et al. 2013). Similarly, large-scale social movements can bring significant attention to issues. This may help drive policy formation, but it is also possible that movements can put issues on the agenda but fail to secure significant policy change (Gaby and Caren 2016).

The formation of policy proposals follows a different logic from agenda-setting. Mass political participation is likely to have effects through organized interest groups that advance policy proposals (Andrews and Edwards 2004). Here, proximity to decision-making bodies is critical through regular communication and securing standing (Gamson 1990). As Knoke (1986:17) observed, "[S]tudies of collective decision-making at both local and national levels often find extensive collaborative efforts, suggesting that networks of inter-organizational exchange may be a significant factor shaping the dynamics and outcomes of influence activities." Sabatier (1991: 148) specifies the key actors as "bureaucrats, legislative personnel, interest groups leaders, researchers, and specialist reporters within a substantive policy area."

The most visible and celebrated indicator of influence in the policy process is the achievement of favorable policies (Amenta 2006; Soule and King 2006). Far-reaching, landmark legislation such as the major civil rights and environmental legislation of the 1960s is the result of multiple causal factors, and varies across policy domains. Thus, mass political participation exerts influence indirectly on the formation of policy proposals and adoption through the media agenda, interest groups, and elected officials. Finally, mass political participation may influence how policies are implemented and their responsiveness to demands from below. As with policy adoption, mass influence is likely to be indirect.

Thus, civic participation does have the potential to influence politics and policy. Klein and Lee (2019: 62) propose a conceptual framework for understanding how political and economic structures and civil society influence each other, what they call "the politics of forward and backward infiltration." Within this framework, the state, economy, and civil society comprise a field with actors who can strategically transform the boundaries among the spheres of power. Klein and Lee (2019:63) conceptualize civil society, "not as a realm or sphere but as a set of diverse and intersecting projects prestructured by an existing field but constantly seeking to reflexively alter the structure of the field." In forward infiltration, civil society penetrates the state and economy; likewise, in backward infiltration state and economic actors penetrate civil society. Forward infiltration encompasses ways of influencing the state that can change rules and policy without directly changing institutions. Though not the primary mode of state influence, this type of political participation, which often falls within the realm of social movements, raises awareness of issues to forge alliances among civil society and state actors, demonstrating how participation can shape shared understanding of political issues that then influence state action.

We have highlighted the potential influence of mass participation on the policy process. Stepping back, we note that this influence is both constrained and, in most cases, mediated. Amenta's (2006) political mediation model provides a useful framework for understanding the potential effects of social movements on policy and can be extended to other forms of mass political participation (see also, Giugni 2007). In short, this perspective holds that political actors must see collective action "as potentially facilitating or disrupting their own goals—augmenting or cementing new electoral coalitions, gaining in public opinion, increasing the support for the missions of governmental bureaus" (Amenta et al. 2019: 456).

CULTURAL CONSEQUENCES

Political participation has broad cultural consequences through the creation and circulation of shared cultural understandings and collective rituals and symbols. These cultural consequences range from the social construction of public issues to the way groups understand themselves and their relation to politics (Perrin 2014). Though culture is often conceptualized as a cause of participation, political participation has important cultural effects that impact further participation, the salience of political issues, and institutional change (Earl 2007). Voting and other forms of participation in institutional politics, for example, can impact political culture. Social movements and protest, according to Amenta and Polletta (2019: 281), can generate cultural change with the potential to benefit movements' constituencies in four main sites: "public opinion and everyday behavior; the media and popular culture; nonpolitical institutions; and policy political institutions." The cultural impacts of political participation have the potential to generate lasting social, institutional, and policy change. We focus on the ways that political participation may affect political legitimacy, trust, and public opinion.

Political Legitimacy and Trust

Political theorists have long recognized the reinforcing relationship between political culture and political institutions. These themes are central to Weber's ([1920] 2009) writing on legitimacy and Tocqueville's (1899) writing on the importance of civic associations in supporting a democratic way of life. Defining civil society as, "the totality of social institutions, both formal and informal, that are not strictly production-related nor governmental or familial in character," Rueschemeyer, Huber, and Stephens (1992: 6, 50) posit that a dense civil society can form a major basis of support for democratic states by acting as "a counter-hegemony of subordinate classes and especially the working class—developed and sustained by the organization and growth of trade unions, working-class parties, and similar groups—that is critical for the promotion of democracy." In other words, democratic polities rely on widespread participation in civil associations as a counterweight to the market and the state.

Recent work advances a complex association between participation in civil associations and political trust (Hooghe 2016; Newton, Stolle, and Zmerli 2018). In a study of political attitudes in Switzerland, Kern (2017) finds that though direct democratic participation may lead to decreased trust in authority at a state or local level, direct participation is associated with increased institutional trust at a collective level. Others scholars suggest that trust may be more influenced by political and economic issues within a country than by participation (Newton 2006). For example, a study of three Dutch municipalities showed that political engagement, like attending a council meeting or having a conversation with an official, had no effect on trust or a negative effect on trust (Siebers, Gradus, and Grotens 2019). Participation in socially homogenous groups may even erode trust in political institutions, as can be seen in right-wing political movements in the United States (Skocpol and Williamson 2012).

Still, civic participation is central to creating and sustaining democratic culture (Almond and Verba [1963] 2015) and democratic systems of governance (Mayne and Geißel 2018;

Putnam 1993). Research on trust and participation in Germany, Greece, Italy, South Korea, and Turkey, for example, shows that people who have trust in political institutions are more likely to engage in forms of political participation, like voting and voicing opinions to media and government (Suh, Yee, and Chang 2013). In this way political participation and trust may have a reinforcing relationship. While some research suggests that the density of organizations is most influential in nation building (Wimmer 2018), new research suggests that certain forms of civic participation may be more effective in building a democratic culture than others. As Lee (2020) notes, active engagement in voluntary organizations can be more likely to facilitate direct forms of political participation, though the type of organization is associated with different levels of political participation. Involvement with art, music, educational, environmental, humanitarian, and charitable organizations likely encourages members to engage in political participation, while engagement in sports or recreation organizations likely do not. In addition, the type of participation depends on the type of voluntary organization with which participants engage. For example, involvement in labor unions may lead to participation in strikes, while involvement in humanitarian and charitable organizations may lead to individually performed action, like signing petitions and joining boycotts. Put differently, not all types of engagement foster democratic participation and not all civil associations foster trust in democratic institutions.

Perrin (2014) argues that democracy must be understood through a cultural lens just as much as through a political lens. The legacy of democratic participation in the United States, through means such as voting and civic engagement, does not merely shape a public culture of democracy; systems of political representation also constitute the collective political interests to be represented (Perrin 2014). Practices, or forms of participation, along with structures and technologies, Perrin writes, interact to shape how people communicate, connect, and develop shared understandings of collectivities, issues, and ideas, what he refers to as “forming publics” (2014), drawing on Ikegami (2000) and Dayan (2005). Widespread practices, like voting and leadership in organizations, enable the formation of national publics, while more bounded practices, like informal political conversation or sharing beliefs with likeminded people through social media, form geographically, culturally, and historically specific publics (Perrin 2014).

Public Opinion and Attitudes

Participation also impacts those who do not engage in the practices just described by increasing the salience of issues in political and nonpolitical institutions, the media, and popular culture. In his foundational text on public opinion formation, Zaller (1992) argues that people use readily available information as heuristics to tap into pre-existing ideological schema to form the political opinions often measured in public opinion polls. The ubiquity of available heuristics, often distributed by the media or political figures, can influence mass opinion on political issues. In this way, social movement activities can influence public opinion by pushing issues into public discourse (Amenta and Polletta 2019).

Amenta and Polletta (2019) outline the ways that social movements, one form of mass political participation, can impact public opinion. Movements may do this by bringing attention to issues through widespread action and media coverage or by providing framing with which the general public may come to understand these issues. This increased awareness may work for or against public perceptions of a given issue, depending on the public's preexisting beliefs. For example, in their study of the relationship between antiwar protest, public opinion, and congressional voting between 1965 and 1973 in the United States, McAdam and Su (2002) find that though certain types of protest may lead to congressional action, this pattern is not mediated through signaling or through changes in public opinion, and may not reflect the protests' demands. Large-scale antiwar protests and police violence against protesters led to congressional action, as shown by impacts on Congressional agenda and an increased pace of roll-call voting, but did not result in pro-peace legislative outcomes. This suggests that although political participation may bring certain issues to the forefront of public awareness, underlying beliefs still shape how people respond to these issues. Indeed, recent work by Kiley and Vaisey (2020) shows that people's opinions are unlikely to change in a durable way after early adulthood and are most likely to respond to "high-profile issues," suggesting that public opinion change catalyzed by mass political action may occur over generations.

Other cases, however, point to potential for coalitions of activists and elites to influence public opinion *and* policy. In the 1990s, an Israeli anti-war movement led by soldiers' mothers conducted strategic outreach efforts to media and political elites to build a coalition of supporters opposing the Israeli war on Lebanon. This led to public acceptance of the movement and its demands, which in turn led policymakers to decide to terminate the war (Lieberfeld 2009). In certain contexts, the response of public opinion to political participation has significant consequences.

In these examples, state actors responded to the issues raised by protesters. As mentioned earlier, participants themselves are also influenced by their own participation. When members of homogenous groups act together in civic associations or social movement organizations, their shared values tend to strengthen and solidify. Emotion and social identity play an influential role in protest participation, drawing likeminded demonstrators together through a shared commitment to collective action (Giugni and Grasso 2019b). The rise of the Tea Party in the United States is a fitting example of how political participation may lead participants to adopt more extreme values. Grassroots right-wing mobilization across the country became a national movement as Tea Party messaging was amplified by the media and by Republican policymakers to further secure public support. Though it is unclear if the Tea Party's messages have impacted the broader American electorate, members' involvement with the movement seems to have entrenched their conservative values (Skocpol and Williamson 2012). Recent research shows that public opinion in the United States polarized between 1972 and 2016, even when removing partisan and ideological identity markers from belief network analyses and controlling for them in these analyses (DellaPosta 2020). This suggests that certain patterns of belief are solidifying even without partisan signaling.

Importantly, mass political participation generates new modes of political expression. Drawing on the work of "critical communities," or "self-aware, mutually interacting groups" of formally or informally organized critical thinkers who articulate new cultural values, Rochon (2000:22), for example, argues that social movements spread new ideas and values across a society that lead to cultural transformation. Political participation can help establish new forms of political expression as has occurred with online communities (Caren, Andrews, and Lu 2020). As a longer-term trend, protest participation has grown in Western societies, and so, too, have people's expectations around protest as a part of everyday life (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). In an analysis of protest marches in France and Belgium in the

1990s, Van Aelst and Walgrave (2001) find that as protest participation has become more accepted, the diversity of protesters has not necessarily increased along with the frequency of protests, and that patterns of participation are relatively stable within countries (Giugni and Grasso 2019b).

INSTITUTIONAL CONSEQUENCES

In this section, we examine how political participation can shape broader structural and institutional change. Political scientists and sociologists have increasingly examined how political participation affects institutional politics (Amenta et al. 2010, 2019). Specifically, we focus on three processes: (1) the origins and expansion of democratic institutions, (2) the integration or fragmentation of a polity, and (3) the development of state capacity. We argue that states may be responsive to demands from below through changes in structures and institutions. Institutional consequences of political participation may occur during a short period of major contestation or over longer time periods. Both routine and contentious forms of political action can spur change.

DEMOCRATIZATION AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

The origins and persistence of democratic institutions reflect popular political struggles. Earlier theories viewed democratization through the lens of modernization linked to economic development thresholds (Brunk, Caldeira, and Lewis-Beck 1987). These and arguments that focus on cultural requisites of a democratic nation (Lipset 1959) have been challenged by scholars. Instead, scholars have linked democratization to popular mobilization, most importantly class-based mass mobilizations (Tilly 1995). Recent work also points to the importance of pro-democracy social movements for the accomplishment and durability of new democracies (Kadivar 2018). For example, using data from 103 non-democratic countries from 1990 to 2004, Kadivar and Caren (2016) highlight a key role that non-elite political actors play since contentious mobilization can increase the probability that a country will liberalize.

Pressures on the state can be conceptualized through balances of power by actors from below, by transnational actors from above, or by actors from "outside," such as noncitizens or foreign business elites who are not formally granted rights in state institutions (Ayoub 2016; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992). Democratization is thus an ongoing process shaped by actors mobilizing both within and outside of formal state apparatuses. In other words, nonstate actors can make appeals to a democratic political process as a precondition for further claims-making, rights, and representation.

Scholarship on the efforts to expand or contract democratic institutions provides additional evidence on the importance of mass political participation (Bollen and Paxton 2000; Kim and Fallon 2020; Markoff 2011). In a general framework that links democracy to social structure, Tilly (2003) posits that the strengthening categorical inequalities along gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexuality works to de-democratize state institutions, especially when such inequalities bleed over into public politics. Participation by actors that would typically be excluded from political democracy allows them to gain access to government institutions and resources. Although state institutions and economic elites can serve as intermediaries that diffuse claims from below, mobilization by nonstate actors can shape this diffusion by working through independent organizations or coopting state institutions themselves. Claims to equality and democratic governance are thus shaped by those previously excluded from formal governmental bodies, such as women, sexual minorities, racial and ethnic minorities, and immigrants. Examining 151 countries from 1893 to 2003, Paxton, Hughes, and Green (2006) find that women's international nongovernmental organizations institutionalized women's equality globally and changed transnational discourse, yielding significant gains in women's political representation. When mass political participation spurs changes in officeholding, this can lead to broader policy changes. For example, across 96 nation-states between 1976 and 2011, there is strong evidence LGBT members of parliament encouraged the adoption of gay-friendly legislation (Reynolds 2013). In other words, action by groups that provide resources, networks, and support for outgroup candidates will not only favor policy to provide more hospitable climates for outgroups but will also result in their institutionalization and political representation to further participation.

Political participation is enabled and constrained by patterns of social integration that work to reinforce such patterns along ascriptive identities or political citizenship. Political elites can consult diverse groups and reorient political parties towards previously marginalized constituencies. For example, German state parliaments are starting to reflect the demographic diversity of its population with respect to immigrant citizens, but there is variation according to the structuring conditions of citizenship law, the size of the immigrant population, and the network and communication structures of metropolitan areas (Schönwälder 2013). Ways of influencing the state by changing the rules of the representational game can bridge divides between state actors and formerly excluded members of civil society through what Klein and Lee (2019) call forward infiltration. Forward infiltration of civil society into the state can thus affect the political integration of fragmentation of the polity.

Political Integration and Fragmentation

Next, we consider the ways that mass political participation may shape the composition of political elites. We draw on Wimmer's (2018) argument that the integration or fragmentation of elites is critical to the process of nation building. Social cohesiveness can be analyzed using the composition of ruling elites or the fractionalization of excluded minority groups. Wimmer (2018) examines national integration and identification with a tridimensional measure of ethnopolitical inclusion, using the density of civil society organizations, the administrative capacity of the state to provide public goods, and linguistic homogeneity. Ethnic difference can structure group dynamics and enable ethnic mobilization (Hechter and Okamoto 2001; Olzak and Tsutsui 1998; Tajfel and Turner 1979). Actors may identify more with governments if their ethnic community is represented in the government, and they can mobilize across different kinds of collective identities to build new institutions and movement infrastructures.

Mass political participation should not only be examined in terms of short-term wins but also through long-term institutional changes. For example, long after the peak mobilizations of the United States' civil rights movement, an electoral mobilization infrastructure composed of local organizations and networks for Black Americans was developed in the South (Andrews 1997). In a cross-national study of 51 countries, women's activism was found to matter for equality in earnings across genders, especially when women allied with unions and leftist parties and created cross-organizational policy networks working to increase wages (Akchurin and Lee 2013). In India, women's direct participation in governance structures that accommodate historically marginalized groups was found to be significant for developing democracy; this supplements theories of democracy in developing countries—traditionally explained using social capital, resource mobilization, and state expenditure (Gibson 2012).

Despite the focus on how movements can shape rights and policies, political participation also matters for how structural changes are ultimately implemented on the ground. Since mass political participation by marginalized groups can hold elected officials accountable, demands from below can be integrated into important policymaking and policy-implementation decisions—such as increased funding for poverty programs in Mississippi (Andrews 2001) or increased housing and latrine provisions in India (Gibson 2012). In urban Brazil, when activists of the health movement were integrated into the state by holding office positions within key subnational institutions, health-policy implementation led to broader health-service coverage and lower mortality (Gibson 2017). In Mississippi, efforts to implement a civil and human rights curriculum in schools were enabled in communities with strong civil rights organizing infrastructures that then contributed to cross-generational civic initiatives and participation among youth (Cunningham and Rondini 2017). Organizational infrastructures and institutional changes that are implemented through civil society are thus not only a cause of participation but can also shape state capacity.

State Capacity

Finally, mass political participation can shape state capacity. State capacity can be conceptualized through many domains of social order, with organizational capacity being only one of the many hands constituting the state (Morgan and Orloff 2017). In Skocpol's (1995) work, mobilization for war provides a key opportunity around which citizens fought to expand rights and social benefits (see also Tilly 1992). Furthermore, because states have a distinctive capacity to shape social orders, the state itself can be taken as an assemblage of institutions that characterize the multiplicity of governing arrangements (Clemens and Lu 2020).

This provides a fertile analytic ground to examine how political participation shapes these crosscutting domains of power. On the one hand, when states respond to contestations and are reconfigured to further their capacity to govern subjects, complex systems of "governed interdependence" can result in processes that ultimately make states less susceptible to challenges from below (Tarrow 2015; Weiss 2014). On the other hand, the interdependent relationship between institutions and various political actors can lead to new enactments of political power.

Scholarship on labor politics examines not only how political structures influence participation in unions or labor movements (Kerrissey and Schofer 2018) but also how labor unions play an important role in influencing state capacity (Collier and Mahoney 1997). In a study of how union-linked civic mobilization can strengthen reformist parties and policymakers, Lee (2007) finds that labor-based organizations make governments more effective and responsive—making for stronger governance that enables state capacity directly through civil structures. By taking the state as an assemblage of institutions, the dividing line between state and civil society becomes increasingly tenuous when civic organizations enable power from below to structure politics. This bottom-up process highlights the importance of working-class organizations and class-based mobilizations, and harkens back to a central claim that mass political participation matters, particularly when it is rooted in class differences and supported by a dense organizational network of civil society institutions (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992). Succinctly put by Kerrissey and Schofer (2018:451), "[I]nstitutions define the playing field of politics, and consequently serve to construct the interests and strategies of organizations and individuals." At the same time, however, these institutions constitute the state itself.

Conclusion

What are the macro-social effects of mass political participation? The broad question we have addressed here spans multiple literatures. We integrate insights from scholarship on voting, civic association, movements, public policy, culture, and political institutions to contend that mass participation may shape macro changes. We have argued for broadly conceptualizing political participation and distinguish three main categories of potential macro-social effect of mass political participation: policy process, cultural consequences, and institutional change. We consider possible direct effects but note that the effects of mass political participation are most likely to be indirect and mediated. Given the complexity of macro-societal change, this is to be expected. Thus, theory and research must focus on specifying the conditions under which political participation and the plausible pathways influence occur alongside the broader set of factors that shape political change.

We have distinguished between three main types of participation, and we recognize that these may have different effects on policy, culture, and institutions. These distinctions require further investigation because current scholarship does not provide sufficient comparative research to allow strong theoretical conclusions. This is an important opportunity for future scholarship to consider the independent and joint effects of different types of mass political participation. We expect there to be important differences, with each mode of participation relying more heavily on different mechanisms of influence. For example, disruption is more common for protest, and routine access and negotiation are used more widely in the electoral arena and by associations and interest groups.

Macro-social change is not only a consequence of political participation but also its cause. In the study of social and political change, issues of reverse causality should thus be considered, as the cyclical nature of participation may make it so that effects of participation-led change also lead to changes in participation over time. When possible, scholars should examine outcomes through longitudinal analyses to examine how complex causal pathways over the *longue durée*. Social movement scholars, in their theorization of cycles of contention, provide one example of how to examine long-term outcomes across time (Tilly and

Tarrow 2015). The comparative historical tradition also provides important examples of documenting processes after large-scale political changes (Skocpol et al. 1985).

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CHAPTER 46

MICRO-LEVEL EFFECTS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

SILKE ROTH AND CLARE SAUNDERS

THE concept of "biographical consequences" of social movements is most closely associated with Doug McAdam's (1989) analysis of the micro-effects of individuals' involvement in high-risk social movement activism. But, as we illustrate in this chapter, it has been used in multiple studies concerned with revealing the micro-level outcomes of social movement participation (Fillieule and Neveu 2019). The term is primarily used to refer to the consequences of activism on the biographies of activists, such as their prospects for and choices of employment, their date of entry into the workplace and their domestic lives—such as when and whether to have children (if this can be a choice) and to marry (if marrying a partner of choice is not criminalized), and on the distribution of household chores. We distinguish biographical consequences from the effects of participation on others, which we consider to be a cultural outcome of activism (Van Dyke and Taylor 2019). The vast majority of existing studies on the biographical outcomes of activism however, are now somewhat outdated accounts of the consequences of 1960s' and 1970s' left-libertarian movements on the biographies of participants (McAdam 1989; McAdam 1999; Shriver et al. 2003). Even though this strand of research covered a wide variety of types of campaigns and organizations, caution should be exercised when making generalizations from studies based on 1960s' and 1970s' left-libertarian movements (Giugni and Grasso 2016).

In this chapter we argue that this predominant strand of literature on the biographical consequences of political participation needs revising in three ways. First, the literature needs to take into account more recent political participation, recognizing that movements of the 1960s and 1970s were active fifty to sixty years ago. On the one hand, these movements have changed values and attitudes towards marriage and having children out of wedlock (McAdam 1999). On the other hand, social movements have innovated their repertoires significantly in the intervening period, which might have dramatic effects on the consequences of political participation. Updating the literature and taking a life-course approach addresses this concern. Second, the account needs to be broadened to reflect a range of different forms of political participation, not restricted to left-libertarian movements, or indeed even to movements. Other forms of political participation, such as voting in elections, joining and being active in political parties, and signing petitions can also have enduring effects on those who participate. Given that the literature argues that biographical consequences result from continuing commitment to social change goals (Andrews 1991; Evans 1979; Fillieule and Neveu 2019; McAdam 1988, 1989, 1992; Whalen and Flacks 1989), it is an oversight to ignore the biographical consequences of other forms of political participation that also have social change goals (such as, but not restricted to, volunteering for a political party, voting in elections and signing petitions). Third, we begin to approach these gaps in the literature by recommending and applying an intersectional approach (Crenshaw 1989, 1991; Hill Collins 2015) and acknowledge how class, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality matter for political participation and its consequences. Intersectionality refers to multiple and intersecting forms of inequality and are highly relevant for the study of political participation (see Chapter 42 in this volume by Slaughter and Brown). To address our concerns, respectively, we review recent literature, recommend a life-course approach, start to think about the micro-level consequences of a variety of different forms of political participation, and think about how the consequences of activism are unequally spread as a result of social disadvantages that can be multiple and overlapping. Before we develop our argument, we introduce the notion of biographical consequences in more depth and summarize some of the studies that use this approach.

The Costs of Activism

McAdam's (1989) study of the long-term consequences of involvement in the Freedom Summer campaign revealed significant differences in what he called the "costs" faced by participants compared to non-participants. These so-called costs differed by gender: male volunteers bore greater costs related to workplace issues (job stability, prestige, income), while female volunteers bore greater costs with respect to marriage and motherhood (McAdam 1988). Studies of progressive, left-leaning activists found that activists of the counter-cultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s remained single for longer and married later (McAdam 1989; McAdam 1999, Franz and McClelland 1994, Shriver et al 2003). However, marriage and romantic relationships also contributed to the involvement in New Left and high-risk activism (Neveu 2019; Olivier and Tamayo 2019; Gayer 2019). At the same time, participants in women's liberation movements of the 1970s and other forms of activism came to question the patriarchal nature of their relationships to their spouses. This sometimes led to domestic conflict, other times to a more mutually agreeable division of labor of household chores (Cherniss 1972). Some studies of civil rights movements and other leftist movements of the 1960s and 1970s found that participants followed different career paths to non-activists. Their careers started later (McAdam 1989), were in flux (Sherkat and Blocker 1997) and were more likely to be in the knowledge, social, or creative sectors (Braungart and Braungart 1990). Involvement in the Freedom Summer Campaign had gendered effects and women tended to be better able to retain secure employment after activism than men (McAdam 1989; McAdam 1992). Moreover, for activists from working-class backgrounds, the involvement in social movements also resulted in access to education and upward social mobility (Neveu 2019; Olivier and Tamayo 2019; Hiverts and Vairel 2019). Furthermore, it is important to address the greater risks that African American participants in the civil rights movements faced, which included lynching and the assassination of prominent leaders such as Martin Luther King and Malcolm X.

We build our intersectional approach to the biographical consequences of activism on the premise that the notion of "costs" in McAdam's (1988, 1989) account reflects mainly white middle-class norms and privileges. Whether forgoing a career or parenthood is a "cost" is, depending on a host of intersecting personal factors, contestable. Indeed, while white middle-class men are overrepresented in political parties and parliaments, it is important to consider a much broader range of forms of political participation and people involved in them. We thus discuss a wide range of low- and high-risk, low- and high-cost activities which are participated in by a range of different people. Our inclusive and intersectional approach invites us to recognize differential opportunities and differential uptake of opportunities for different subsections of the population to participate in politics. Women, ethnic minorities, and migrants have historically had few opportunities to participate in institutional politics. They have been excluded from the right to vote and thus had to find alternative ways to get involved in the political process—with biographical consequences. This has had enduring effects on participation in other forms of politics: the participation of men and women in protest events continues to vary across different gender regimes (Roth and Saunders 2019, 2020). Similarly, criminalization of illegal immigrants and homosexuals prevents them from openly participating in many forms of political action (Kollman and Waites 2011). Moreover, even after—in some countries—the decriminalization of homosexuality, lesbian and gay activists have faced continued discrimination in the workplace. A membership survey of scholars in the US-based Sociologists Lesbian and Gay Caucus (SLGC) revealed that they received considerable discrimination in the workplace (Gagnon et al. 1982). A follow-up survey and in-depth interviews suggested that their sense of discrimination in the workplace had risen by 1992: 71 percent reported some form of discrimination, whether in hiring, tenure/promotion, exclusion from networks, scholarly devaluation, or harassment and intimidation (Taylor and Raeburn 1995). The involvement in right-wing groups also represents a form of high-risk activism. Members of the English Defence League (Pilkington 2016) experienced exclusion and suspension from school, job loss, imprisonment, physical injuries, and threat. Furthermore, African American protests tend to be policed more than white protests (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong 2011), this means that "protesting while Black" represents a significant risk.

The biographical outcomes (marital and parental status, occupational careers) of political participation vary with respect to the nature of the political activity participated in and the time-period one considers. For example, marriage rates and parenthood vary across political parties, trade unions, and feminist or LGTBQ organizations. Overall, in many countries, marriage rates have dropped in recent decades and having children out of wedlock is now much more accepted than fifty years ago—arguably a cultural outcome of the women's and counter-cultural social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Legislative change resulted in an increase of civil partnerships and marriage of gay and lesbian couples and adoption of children by them (Whittier 2016). Thus, any review of studies that investigate biographical consequences of political participation needs to bear in mind that some of these results may be little more than an artifact of studying a particular demographic within the context of broader sociocultural changes. Moreover, parenthood and employment can be reasons to get involved in some types of causes and modes of political participation (Roth 2016). Unsurprisingly, the gendered division of labor in the private sphere affects the involvement in political participation (Walby 2009; Parry et al. 2021).

VARIETIES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION—VARIETIES OF CONSEQUENCES

Although most studies on the outcomes of social movement participation focus on activists who participated in left-libertarian movements in the 1960s and 1970s, Corrigall-Brown (2012, 2019) compared activists involved in groups from the left and the right. With respect to biographical consequences of activism for these groups, she found that (previous) participants had a tendency to work in employment that reflected their ideologies (Corrigall-Brown 2019), but whereas left-leaning activists tended to remain involved in local community groups and demonstrations, right-leaning activists tended to maintain check-book (these days perhaps better referred to as direct-debit) or nominal activism in volunteer groups and the church. Based on a panel study of Swiss households who were surveyed between 1999 and 2013, Giugni and Grasso (2016: 98) conclude that "demonstrating has an important and durable effect on such political-life outcomes as self-placement on the left–right scale, voting for the left, membership in environmental organizations and party membership."

In order to more fully assess the micro-effects—or biographical consequences—of political participation, it is, however, important to look beyond movements and to distinguish a wide variety of political acts, ranging from signing petitions, voting, involvement in political parties, and standing for election at local, national, and supra-national levels, participation in online and offline protest, involvement in third-sector organizations, and also political consumerism, political parenting, and lifestyle movements. These forms of political participation are not mutually exclusive and may be performed simultaneously or successively (Roth 2016). Moreover, participation in them oftentimes changes over the life-course (Roth 2016). Depending on the risk-taking and resources (time, money) they require, these different forms of political participation have different consequences on those engaged in them (Davenport et al. 2011; Taylor and Raeburn 1995). Furthermore, as already noted, depending on gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and other markers of inequality, participants face different risks and different consequences for political participation. This highlights—once more—the importance of approaching differences in the micro-effects of political participation from an intersectional perspective, addressing gender, class, and racial/ethnic differences in political participation (see Chapter42 in this volume by Slaughter and Brown). Some forms of political participation are associated with privilege and access to resources, others with being multiply deprived. We will go on to first discuss the ways in which those who have economic resources and are otherwise privileged are overrepresented within traditional forms of political participation. We will then turn to self-help and community activism, which provides opportunities for those who are disadvantaged. We note that various forms of political participation and activism can result in upward and downward mobility. In the following sections we therefore consider empowerment, subsequent mobilization, and burnout as biographical consequences of political participation. Furthermore, we consider professionalization processes and lifestyle movements.

Conventional Forms of Political Participation

We use the term "conventional forms" of political participation to refer to voting (in elections and referenda), participating in or volunteering for political parties (including standing for election), and signing petitions. Although there is by now a vast literature on the factors that encourage people to participate in such forms of political engagement, there is a deficiency of knowledge about micro-level consequences of such participation. The limited studies that exist suggest that these forms of action might stimulate senses of political efficacy (Finkel 1985; Bowler and Donavan 2002), which results in such behaviors becoming habit forming (Gerber et al 2003; Valentino et al 2009). We suspect that this varies across different types of traditional political participation, interacting in a variety of ways depending on senses of internal (individual) efficacy and external efficacy (system responsiveness).

Engaging in initiatives that promote direct democracy (e.g., referenda) seems to improve both internal and external efficacy, which is oftentimes associated with further participation (Bowler and Donavan 2002). Voting and party participation, however, seem to reinforce only external efficacy, perhaps because they are not especially cognitively demanding and because they are not self-directed, but principally directed towards government and institutions (Finkel 1985). But even this is differentiated: being on a consistently losing side at elections reduces senses of efficacy and weakens tendencies to continue participation (Bowler and Donavan 2002). Similarly, the lacking sense of external efficacy derived from failed Downing Street petitions, oftentimes seen as toothless (Wright 2012), is likely to demotivate further participation (Hensby 2021). These are very generalized studies of political participation, which do not take account of the different biographies of activists, nor of how multiple layers of disadvantage might intersect. We now make some suppositions in line with a more intersectional approach.

In many democracies, the electorate is skewed towards the "grey vote," which benefits older voters, for example with respect to pension security and increases or benefits such as bus passes or free television licenses. We can infer that the lower participation rates of young people and ethnic minorities in elections indicates that these groups do not believe that voting would have a positive impact on their lives. In many countries, political parties and parliaments are still gendered and racialized organizations in which white middle-class men are overrepresented and women and ethnic minorities experience discrimination and harassment. Those who find that the political system discriminates against them find alternative ways to express their political discontent, such as self-help/mutual aid organizations, prefigurative politics, and online participation, oftentimes with other enduring consequences. In addition, women and other groups that have been excluded from traditional political participation have successfully mobilized for political rights and for efforts to increase their involvement, for example through quotas (Paxton et al. 2006). (See Chapter 33 in this volume by Bernal and Kittilson gender and political participation.)

Self-Help, Mutual Aid and Empowerment

The involvement in grass-roots organizations is an important form of political participation for those who lack resources and access to traditional forms of political participation such as voting and standing for office. This is well illustrated by Bassel and Emejulu's (2017) research on minority women's anti-austerity activism in France, England, and Scotland. Minority women in these countries are confronted by the rise of nationalist and xenophobic movements and represent a high proportion of those who are unemployed or underemployed, working in low-skilled, low-paid, and temporary employment, or living in poverty. They are involved in third-sector organizations that are engaged in welfare service provision, crisis relief, political organizing, campaigning, and advocacy. In addition, they are creating self-help groups and grassroots community organizations which are spaces for self-care and solidarity work. Bassel and Emejulu (2017) thus demonstrate that in order to make minority women's political participation visible, one needs to broaden the definition of political activism. The involvement in community activism, for example women's support for British striking mine workers in the 1980s, resulted in politicization processes and the challenging of conventional views of gender relations (Spence and Stephenson 2009; Beckwith 2016). This raises important questions about differential access to, and outcomes from, what has been called pre-figurative politics.

Prefigurative Politics

Breines (1982) introduced the term "prefigurative politics" to describe the organizational strategies of the New Left, which rejected bureaucratic and hierarchical organizations and instead insisted on consensus decision-making. It is a term, however, that can equally be applied to political acts associated with the left and the right. It is a type of political practice that tries to embody the world it wants to see within its own practices. For example, the Clamshell Alliance, a network that protested against nuclear power in New England in the late 1970s, prioritized consensus decision-making over other "instrumental" goals (Downey 1986). Organizations which employ consensus-decision making or lack formal decision-making processes can result in a "tyranny of structurelessness" (Freeman 1972) which excludes activists who have less time or who are less experienced. Moreover, Rothschild-Whitt (1979) noted that consensus-decision making can be exclusionary through relying on friendship-networks and white middle-class privilege. Thus, the biographical consequences may be different for those who access cliques and gain experience compared to those who do not. However, some organizations explicitly engage in political intersectionality, that is, they are aware of power-differences between members and seek to include marginalized groups (Terriquez 2015; Einwohner et. al. 2021; Ishkanian and Pena Saavedra 2019; Roth 2021). For example, members of immigrant groups have been known to become politically active after attending language and computer skills classes (Chun et. al 2013; Costanza-Chock 2014), which allowed them to subsequently take on leadership positions. A successful approach to political intersectionality might ensure that the benefits of political participation are distributed more equitably. In the next section we address online political participation which has become increasingly important for the involvement in political activism and may have helped distribute political participation and its biographical consequences more evenly in countries less affected by the digital divide.

Online Political Participation

Since the beginning of the millennium, and accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, information and communication technologies (ICT) have increasingly shifted political participation online (see Chapter 26 in this volume by Earl and Kenski). This has affected the work of political parties as well as social movements. The advent of Web 2.0 facilitated interactivity through social networking opportunities and provides new forms of political participation (Van Laer and Van Aelst 2010). Bennett and Segerberg (2012) suggest that digital media has resulted in a paradigm shift from organizationally focused collective action to web-based "connective action," which is characterized by personalized accounts that "travel over social networking platforms, email lists and online coordinating platforms" (Bennett and Segerberg 2012: 742). This also means that online participation can be prefigurative and result in offline participation (Mercea 2012). Based on a survey conducted prior to the US presidential election, Kim and Ellison (2021) found a relationship between political activities on social media and offline participation. However, this relationship differs depending on network similarity and political homogeneity. Those who belong in homogenous networks who mutually reinforce each other's behavior are more likely to be politically active than those who belong to heterogeneous networks. The outcomes of online political participation vary across different sub-groups of the population: access to technology and high speed broadband, and online participation competence vary across social and cultural groups. It is important to point out that ICT and social media also give way to new forms of surveillance and repression (Tufekci 2017). In repressive regimes, the outcomes of even exchanging political information online can be high risk (or, as Van Laer and Van Aelst 2010 put it, high threshold) and result in arrest—a clear deterrent to future political participation. In addition, participants engaging in digital feminism experience trolling and online abuse (Mendes et al. 2018).

An Intersectional Approach to Understanding Biographical Consequences

In the next section, we expand on our recommended intersectional and life-course approach more fully by focusing on collective identity, (im)moral careers, senses of self, and the different pathways through activism that people can take. We argue that mobilization outcomes and changing forms of activism and identities are important micro-effects of political participation. Although the concept of intersectionality has initially been introduced to theorize the experiences of women of color (Crenshaw 1989, 1991), it is relevant for all social movements (Roth 2021).

Collective Identity, Moral Careers and Sense of Self

In relation to identity, political activists' sense of "self" changes through participation: generating new senses of collective identity (Roth 2000; Saunders 2008) and therefore new assessments of the self. Although this notion has been applied most to left-libertarian social movement contexts, there is no reason why it cannot also be applied to right-wing movement participation and active participation in more traditional forms of political participation, such as political parties. For example, the "cultures of solidarities" that Fantasia (1988) identified in relation to class consciousness can develop among activists deeply engaged in any political collective. Similarly, free spaces (Evans and Boyte 1986), submerged networks (Melucci 1989), and abeyance structures (Taylor 1989) provide environments for creating and sustaining collective identity, regardless of political orientation. Evans and Boyte (1986: 17) define free spaces as environments in which "people are able to learn a new self-respect, a deeper and more assertive group identity, public skills, and values of cooperation and civic virtue." Political identities are shaped partly through changing assessments of the legitimacy of the actions of in-groups and out-groups. For example, activists can come to distrust police (Drury and Reicher 2000), institutions, or even other social movement organizations (Saunders 2008), while establishing a firmer belief that they are, or had been, doing the right thing (Adamek and Lewis 1975). The more or less enduring identities of subgroups of political activists may differ due to generational effects thought to condition political attitudes (e.g., Manheim 1952) and micro-cohort effects (Whittier 1997). The identities that develop through participation vary according to gender, class, race, sexuality, and the interaction of these systems of disadvantage. For example, the identities of Black, working-class women differ from those of white, middle-class women However, political intersectionality results from coalition building across markers of difference such as race, class, and gender (Roth 2003, 2021). Exclusionary collective identities come with benefit of high levels of intragroup solidarity, which strengthen the habit-forming potential of activism in a clique, but which might come at the expense of collaborative relationships with a broader movement (Ferree and Roth 1998; Saunders 2008; Saunders 2013), perhaps inducing cynicism and burnout.

Effects of political participation can be long-lasting and result in a "moral career" (Fillieule 2015) trajectory. Of course, Fillieule was referring primarily to left-wing morals, but Corrigall-Brown's (2019) work—which we mentioned earlier—reminds us that right-leaning activists also develop careers that fit their morals and identities. Political participation shapes political values and personality traits. A study of student activists found that compared to student non-activists, they were more cognitively flexible, had more autonomy, and expressed their emotions and thoughts more impulsively (Whittaker and Watts 1971). When confronting issues of class, race, gender, and sexuality, activists learn to become yet more cognitively flexible.

Boundary-Crossers, Careers and Professionalization

It is likely that different types of biographical outcomes of political participation affect each other. For example, the values that participants in politics come to adopt affect their moral choices, which in turn affects their life choices—such as finding employment that suits their ideologies. Left-wing political activists frequently end up in "helping professions" that involve providing a service to others (Pagis 2019; Neveu 2019). Some professions are chosen to bring about social change, for example teachers, social workers, lawyers, and a range of other professionals engage in "occupational activism" (Gorski and Chen 2015; Valochi 2013). As Fillieule (2015) puts it, left-wing activists develop a "moral career," which usually generates a lower than average income (Giugni 2004). However, our intersectional approach alerts us to the fact that whether activists can sustain their unpaid or low-paid participation in a political organization depends on whether they have savings, benefits, the support of friends or family, or inherited wealth. These factors are unequally distributed across sociodemographic groups. For those less fortunate, it is common for political activists to work on short-term contracts or combine various part-time jobs or freelance work (Newman 2012). After all, most activists have to make a living—they might work in a helping profession and volunteer in social change organizations before they find paid employment in social change organizations. The consequences of participation are therefore different for those from privileged backgrounds, who will find it easier to volunteer than those who have no financial support, savings, or inherited wealth to provide for themselves and dependents (Taylor and Roth 2019). This has consequences for activists' (political) careers. Those who can afford to pursue low-paid or unpaid internships in non-governmental organizations are able to develop experiences and networks which help to gain access to various forms of political office and leadership. Paid positions contribute to the sustainability of activism and thus widen political participation (as long as they do not depend on previous work experience in unpaid volunteering and internships). In her study of feminist and women's right activists involved in online campaigning, Gleeson (2016) found that even though the two campaigners who worked on the campaign as paid part-time employees were in a precarious position, they remained far longer with the campaign than the unpaid campaigners. Moreover, as already, depending on the class background, activism can also result in upward mobility. From an intersectional perspective it is important to consider how gender and class, paid employment, and unpaid care work, intersect to enable and constrain political participation.

Political activists have a tendency to participate in other issues after participation in one campaign. This might be, as we discussed earlier, the result of habit-forming, but—for collective acts of political participation—it can also be because they develop structural availability (Saunders et al 2012), which basically refers to the process through which previous activists find themselves in the right place and the right time for further political action. Collective activists'—whether social movement participants, trade unionists, or active party members, can develop strong bonds with others inside of activist circles, which puts them in a good social space to hear about other collective political actions (Drury et al. 2003). A consequence of developing strong bonds with others in a political collective is that personal relationships outside of activist circles may weaken (Shriver et al 2003; Passy and Giugni 2000). Weakened relationships with others outside of political activity might be partially responsible for some of the biographical outcomes of political participation we outlined earlier (e.g., marrying later). But the stronger relationships inside social movements and political organizations are likely to be a vehicle for other personal changes they might make. If activists, themselves, develop an intersectional approach, it would allow them to break out of holding one exclusive identity (Roth 2000; Saunders 2008) and could prevent factionalism in movements (Einwohner et. al. 2021; Roth 2021). For example, local activists often "generalize" to participate in campaigns on broader issues (Saunders

2013). And they may come to change their shopping/consumer behaviors to fit with their moral (or, if we are making a normative judgment here, immoral) compass, to become more like others in their organization (Vestergren et al 2017). Stuart et al (2013), for example, found that participants in Sea Shepherd—the organization that uses direct action at sea to protect marine wildlife—reduced their meat consumption, or became vegetarian or vegan. In the women's movement, street activists have shifted to different modes of participation as the movement has institutionalized: increasingly, participating in everyday resistance and "the politics of associationalism." Saunders (2013) describes how radical environmentalists came to adopt similar cultural traits such as veganism, a casual clothing style, dreadlocks, and shunning car use. Salt and Layzell (1985) document how the wives of UK striking miners adopted a more unisex clothing style.

While political participation can be empowering and can result in (political) careers and lifestyle changes, it also can result in burnout, another important micro-effect, to which we turn next.

Burnout and its Prevention

Political participation can be physically, psychologically, and financially stressful. Key and interrelated components of burnout include exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy (Maslach and Gomes 2006). Exhaustion is the experience of being overwhelmed and drained; cynicism is a response to exhaustion, which while it might initially be self-protecting, in the long term undermines commitment to the cause; inefficacy is the experience of lack of achievement which might be caused by lack of resources and unachievable goals (Maslach and Gomes 2006: 44). Although there is ample evidence on disengagement from traditional forms of political participation (see, for example, Saunders 2014), it has scarcely been related to the literature on activist burnout, even though cynicism has been frequently reported (Saunders and Klandermans 2020).

Burnout can be triggered by working conditions such as long working days, conflicts and varied frustrations, and lack of resources and recognition (Cox 2010; Rodgers 2010). For example, education activists have experienced chronic psychological and mental health effects including chronic depression, stress, anxiety and panic attacks, the decline of physical well-being as well as disillusionment and hopelessness (Gorski and Chen 2015). In addition, even within racial justice movements activists of color have experienced racism from white activists (Gorski 2019: 672). Political intersectionality is crucial to prevent burnout that might be caused or exacerbated by racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination within social movements and other forms of political activism, and thus promote the political participation of underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Burnout is a possible consequence of political participation both for volunteers and for full-time staff. Developing an "activism–work–life balance" (Roth 2016), and shifting from one form of political participation to another, including occupational activism, are strategies to avoid activist burnout. Such boundary-crossing is overlooked if one focuses only on one form of political participation or ignores family, community, and workplaces as sites of political participation. Activists can prevent or overcome burnout by addressing the imbalance between goals and the resources that are needed to achieve them. This can be achieved by changing the focus of political participation and pursuing more realistic, pragmatic goals

(Maslach and Gomes 2006). In addition, attention to personal needs, avoiding exhaustion at work, engaging in mindfulness practices, and distancing oneself from work, contribute to avoiding burnout and sustaining activism (Gorski 2015; Downton and Wehr 1998; Gleeson 2016; Bunnage 2014). We must bear in mind that multiple systems of disadvantage make it harder for some social groups to engage in well-being initiatives due to a lack of time or money. Therefore, burnout is likely to be unequally distributed, falling harder on more disadvantaged groups.

This section focused on the development of political participation across the life-course and concerns the boundary-crossing between different forms of political participation, political careers, and professionalization processes as well as burnout. In the final section of this article, we are discussing methodological approaches to studying the micro-effects of political participation.

Researching the Biographical Consequences of Political Participation

Our review of research on the biographical consequences of political participation clearly indicates the need to take a life-course perspective (Roth 2000; Miethe and Roth 2005; Fillieule and Neveu 2019). Ideally, qualitative retrospective life-history or biographical interviews (see Chapter 17 by Bosi in this volume on biographical methods) are combined with quantitative (and qualitative) longitudinal studies to explore the effects of multiple dimensions of inequality on participation in protest and thus employ an intersectional perspective. We already have discussed McAdam's (1988, 1989) research on Freedom Summer, which reveals that social movement participation has its roots in previous relationships and activities and shows the impact of social-movement participation on the life-course of participants. Blee (1996) argues that the focus on life histories is particularly well suited to understanding the "sequences and patterning of life events and thereby untangling causes and effects of political affiliation. [...] They illuminate both the events that crystallize consciousness and mobilize action and social structures and networks that nourish (or fail to nourish) activist identities and beliefs during periods of political inactivity" (Blee 1996: 687). Life histories provide a context for understanding the fluctuation and "transient character" (Klandermans 1992) of movement participation. Similarly, Della Porta notes that compared to other data "life stories are better suited to describe processes" (Della Porta 1992: 188). Della Porta (1992) asserts that the biographical method is especially useful for studying social movement participation and counterculture, but we believe it just as important to understand political participation in more conventional contexts through life histories. Political participation is one practice among others within the trajectory of the life-course (Connell 1987; Della Porta 1992). This means that political participation is informed by and responds to developments in individuals' family histories and work careers (Blumberg 1990). As we noted earlier, parenthood (or factors that prevent parenthood) as well as work experiences can cause political participation. Thus, political participation is both shaped by these experiences and shapes them. The conduct of life is shaped by the values, interests, and ideologies that are characteristic of political generations, social classes, and ethnic groups. In life histories the relative importance of race, class, and gender are reconstructed, and therefore allow us to study political participation from an intersectional perspective.

Longitudinal quantitative methods using panel surveys will allow scholars to develop a better understanding of causal chains that are currently little understood. It has been a long-standing debate whether ideologies and identities are outcomes or causes of political activism. Likewise, research on senses of efficacy and political participation have no clear line of causality: efficacy might stem from being involved in successful political action, but personal efficacy might be necessary to pull people into activism in the first place. Such an approach can build on a biographical approach by allowing changes to the life-course to be modeled over long periods of time on the same sample. Like qualitative methods, quantitative methods also allow to approach the micro-effects of political participation from an intersectional perspective.

Conclusions

Until recently, most research on biographical consequences of political participation has narrowly focused on the experience of white middle-class men and women in high-risk activism and protest. Studies that broaden the perspective on different types of political participation, including high- and low-risk activism in different countries and different points in time demonstrate that activism has different costs and benefits. Political participation can result in upward mobility and learning processes in political organizations—but can also result in imprisonment. Our intersectional approach has argued that the biographical outcomes of political participation are not straightforwardly determinable, but are conditioned heavily by structural inequalities, such as class, gender, race, and sexuality. Passy and Monsch (2019) recognize that the biographical consequences are closely intertwined with broader processes of socialization, but few scholars have linked this to intersectionality. However, a recent study by Terriquez and Lin (2020) analyzed the political socialization of immigrant youth from an intersectional perspective. Intersectionality allows us to recognize that political acts are not straightforwardly high or low risk: what is low risk to some groups is high risk to others. The costs of action are interpreted differently by different social groupings. So, too, are the benefits of participation unequally distributed. A privileged person can invest more time in volunteering to slowly build a career than can someone less privileged. Moreover, the very types of activism people are attracted to in the first place vary according to sociodemographic factors. Disadvantaged people are more likely to engage in self-help than their privileged counterparts, who are freer to work on more universalistic concerns (Inglehart 1977). Studying the micro-effects of political participation in a biographical perspective shows how intertwined the outcomes of political participation are with the presence or absence of social privilege, which determines development of personal relationships and work careers. Our central argument is that it is important to broaden the perspective and examine the impact of different types of political participation and include the experience of groups which are less privileged and possibly multiply marginalized.

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CHAPTER 47

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

JENNIFER OSER

Concerns about democratic legitimacy have recently come to the forefront of public and political discourse, raising the question of whether citizens' political actions can achieve intended outcomes. Two opposing trends documented in recent research are especially notable: stagnating or decreasing electoral-oriented participation (Blais and Rubenson 2013; Scarrow et al. 2017) and increasing participation beyond the electoral realm (Dalton 2015; Gibson and Catijoch 2013; Grasso 2016; Theocharis and van Deth 2018; Vráblíková 2016). While the prevalence and sociodemographic correlates of different forms of participation are among the most-studied topics in political science (e.g., Marien et al. 2010; Oser 2017; Oser et al. 2013; Schlozman et al. 2018; Schradie 2018), there is less research on the effectiveness of these forms of participation.

A core idea in democratic theory is that democratic governance should be responsive to the will of the people (Dahl 1961; Mill [1861] 1962; Pitkin 1967). Indeed, the importance of a democracy's responsiveness to public preferences was articulated in stark terms in Key's (1961: 7) statement that "[u]nless mass views have some place in the shaping of policy, all the talk about democracy is nonsense." Determining whether a given democratic government meets Key's expectation that mass views shape policy requires answering two critical questions: how precisely the will of the people is expressed, and how decision makers respond to messages on those mass views. Most empirical research on this topic has focused on the connection between public opinion and representation, and this large body of research has firmly established that public opinion is relevant to governance in advanced democracies (Canes-Wrone 2015; Miller and Stokes 1963; Soroka and Wlezien 2010).

In contrast to the extensive literature on the connection between *opinion* and representation, fewer studies have focused on the connection between *political participation* and representation, and the empirical findings are mixed. The political act of voting has been the focus of most research on the connection between political behavior and representation, as summarized in Powell's (2004: 92) classic model of the "Chain of Responsiveness". A variety of empirical analyses based on US and cross-national data have found a connection between voting and representation (Dassonneville et al. 2021; Griffin and Newman 2005; Hooghe et al. 2019; Peters and Ensink 2015). Although recent research has challenged the generalizable claim that elections and voting are mechanisms that have a causal effect of producing responsive government (Achen and Bartels 2016), an analysis focusing on issue voting shows clear responsiveness to voters' issue preferences (Guntermann and Persson, forthcoming). While evidence indicates that both representatives and citizens consider voting to be the most effective form of political participation (Hooghe and Marien 2014), researchers have suggested that a potential causal mechanism that underlies the link between voting and responsiveness may be that individuals who vote are also more likely to participate in additional ways, and that these extra-electoral actions influence decision makers (Bartels 2009; Griffin and Newman 2005; Schlozman et al. 2012: 117–146).

A related shift in research on the effectiveness of political participation is a move toward focusing on political activities beyond voting. Research on the phenomenon of non-electoral participation as the focus of inquiry is not new, as it was launched by the pioneering work of Verba and Nie (1972) and Barnes and Kaase (1979). Literature on this topic has grown in recent years, focusing primarily on the sociodemographic and attitudinal factors associated with different forms of participation (Dalton 2017; Grasso and Giugni 2019; Oser et al. 2014; Oser, forthcoming). Yet, leading scholars on topics related to the effectiveness of participation have noted a surprising lack of systematic research tracing the linkages between different forms of non-electoral participation with representational outcomes (Bartels 2009: 168; Campbell 2012: 347; Norris 2007: 644; Schlozman 2002: 461; van Deth 2020; Verba 2003: 666; Verba and Nie 1972: 2).

A representative critique of the lack of rigorous empirical research on the effectiveness of different forms of political participation was articulated by Bartels (2009: 168): "For the most part, scholars of participation have treated actual patterns of governmental responsiveness as someone else's problem." The relative dearth of empirical analysis by participation scholars on its effectiveness is not due to an oversight about the importance of the topic, as evident in the opening pages of Verba and Nie's (1972: 2) classic study of *Participation in America.* After discussing a series of important questions about participation, they noted: "And perhaps most important of all (and most difficult to answer), What are the consequences of citizen participation?" Yet the empirical and analytical challenges inherent in assessing this type of causal relationship were seemingly insurmountable at the time of Verba and Nie's (1972) study. Three decades later, Verba (2003: 666) reaffirmed both the importance and difficulty of exploring this topic, emphasizing the challenge of measuring whether political participation leads to the "ultimate payoff" of "getting results." Yet a series of recent studies have begun to fill this gap in the literature by implementing research designs that examine the impact of a variety of political behaviors on political outcomes, including cultural effects, ideological representation, and policy change (Amenta and Polletta 2019; De Bruycker and Rasmussen, forthcoming; Esaiasson and Narud 2013; Gillion and Soule 2018; Giugni and Grasso 2019; Leighley and Oser 2018; Rasmussen et al., forthcoming).

A main focus of research on the effectiveness of all forms of participation has been the topic of participatory inequalities, as "inequalities in activity are likely to be associated with inequalities in democratic responsiveness" (Verba et al. 1995: 14). The tension between two core democratic ideals shapes research on these topics: equality of representation versus responsiveness to the expressed will of the people. The theory-based tension between these democratic ideals of equality and responsiveness is relevant for all forms of participation, and this tension is particularly acute in relation to participation beyond the electoral arena. While the individual-level impact of voting is limited by the principle of "one person, one vote," individuals can engage in multiple forms of non-voting participation frequently, and empirical research has generally shown that those with sociodemographical advantages are particularly active in participation beyond the electoral arena (Grasso 2018; Schlozman et al. 2018). Indeed, scholars have analogized the potential for individuals' simultaneous engagement in multiple types of political acts to generate participatory inequality as raising the voice of motivated activists (Verba et al. 1995), or alternatively, as providing politically active individuals with additional tools in their toolbox (Harris and Gillion 2010). The remainder of this chapter builds on this introduction to further examine state-of-the-art scholarship on the effectiveness of the "voice" and "tools" of different forms of participation.

State of the Art of the Literature: The Effectiveness of Different Forms of Participation

An important starting point for investigating the effectiveness of various forms of participation is clarifying key terms. Empirically measuring the "effectiveness" of forms of political participation entails analyzing the connection between a specific form of participation and two main types of outcomes: representational outcomes and individual attitudes. This section first reviews the different *types of participation* discussed in the literature, including various categorizations over time. Second, recent research is reviewed that investigates how different forms of participation affect representational outcomes in studies of the *participation–representation* connection. Finally, this section concludes by discussing the primary attitudinal measure related to effectiveness, namely *political efficacy*. The discussion focuses on highlighting theoretical and empirical contributions, which lays the foundation for the consideration of opportunities for future research in the section entitled 'New Data, Challenges, and Opportunities.'

The Categorization of Different Forms of Participation

Defining theory-based categories of political participation, and systematically investigating the distinctive correlates of these categories, remains an ongoing theoretical and empirical challenge in scholarship on political participation. Beyond the classic electoral-oriented political act of voting, which has generally stagnated or declined in recent decades, comprehensive studies of political behavior have often identified two broad categories of political behavior (Albacete 2014; Brady 1999: 767; Grasso and Giugni 2019; Quaranta 2016; Vráblíková 2014, 2016). Institutionalized participation—also described as "electoral-oriented," "traditional," or "conventional"— encompasses party membership, and some studies also include electoral-adjacent activities, such as contacting public officials. Non-institutionalized participation—also described as "extra-electoral," "extra-institutionalized," or "unconventional"—is most clearly identified as elite-challenging activities such as protesting against institutions or individuals in power, and some studies also include activities that have emerged more recently, such as political consumerism and online activism. Recent research on the emergence and increased prevalence of online political participation often broadly characterizes these activities as non-institutionalized, while noting that specific online actions (e.g., contacting politicians online) may be electoral-oriented in nature (Anduiza et al. 2012; Gibson and Cantijoch 2013; Theocharis 2015; Vaccari 2013).

In addition to this dichotomous (institutionalized/non-institutionalized) categorization, several prominent studies have proposed and tested more fine-grained distinctions (e.g., Teorell et al. 2007; van Deth 2014; Verba et al. 1978). For example, Verba et al. (1978) identified four main modes of participation: voting, campaign activity, communal activity, and particularized contacts. Teorell et al. (2007) proposed five modes, including voting, party activity, consumer participation, contacting, and protest activity. Van Deth (2014) developed a four-part conceptual typology that includes political participation that occurs in the political sphere, targets the political sphere, targets community issues, and is non-political but politically motivated. Subsequent studies have validated the main principles of van Deth's (2014) four-part typology, with one study based on data from Germany suggesting an additional type is necessary to account for digitally networked participation (Theocharis and van Deth 2018), while another contemporaneous study based on data from Denmark finds no distinctive type is needed for online activities (Ohme et al. 2018). As noted in Hooghe's (2014) discussion of the difficulty of pinpointing a moving target, typologies of participation will likely continue to shift over time and across contexts along with inevitable changes in political participants' intended outcomes.

The Participation–Representation Connection

One of the most prominent theoretical frameworks for investigating the effectiveness of political participation from the perspective of the participation–representation connection is Powell's (2004: 92) "Chain of Responsiveness," which focuses on the act of voting to draw links between four stages of democratic responsiveness: (Stage 1) Citizen preferences → (Stage 2) Citizens' voting behavior → (Stage 3) Selecting policymakers → (Stage 4) Public policies and outcomes. Powell's model represents the state of the art of scholarship on this topic, summarizing the extant research on voting as the key political act that induces policy responsiveness, while also setting a broader research agenda that continues to produce new insights into electoral-oriented participation and responsiveness (e.g., Powell 2018; Rasmussen et al. 2019).

When the political behavior under investigation in the chain of responsiveness is not voting, but rather non-electoral forms of participation, Verba and Nie's (1972) observation of the difficulty of examining whether political participation yields responsiveness is even more salient, as the causal mechanisms that provide directional linkages between Stage 1 (Citizens' Preferences) and Stage 4 (Public Policies and Outcomes) are less clearly defined. Prior research has shown that the role of the media becomes even more prominent in conveying the will of the people as expressed in non-electoral participation to decision makers (e.g., Walgrave and Vliegenthart 2012). Yet, there are no clearly identified parallels to the arrows in Powell's (2004) model for voting that serve as clear, consistent causal links that connect non-institutionalized participation to policy outcomes. Thus, compared to research on voting, research on the linkages between non-electoral participation and representational outcomes requires more variance in research designs' focus on the type of participation investigated, the mechanisms by which this participation may have an impact, and the type of representational outcomes that different forms of participation aim to achieve.

An important line of research on the participation–representation connection entails case studies in the social movement literature that use process-tracing and historical institutional methods (e.g., Ganz 2000, 2009; McAdam 2017; Shoshan 2018; Tarrow 1994; Tilly and Tarrow 2007). While this body of research has identified a number of cases in which specific forms of participation seem to be effective at achieving the goals of participants, a common critique of this work is that researchers often investigate salient and successful cases (Amenta et al. 2018). This "selection on the dependent variable" (i.e., effectiveness) raises concerns about the generalizability of the findings (Burstein 2014; Campbell 2012; McAdam and Schaffer Boudet 2012). Prominent scholars in the field such as Marco Giugni (2009) have proposed that movements do not generally matter much, but they can have an impact if they have allies within the institutional arena and/or favorable public opinion, and this argument is supported by recent research of Han, McKenna, and Oyakawa (2021). A related area of research contributes to knowledge about how social movements may have an impact by tracing how leaders build memberships, strategic capacity, and narratives about political change that influence social and political outcomes (Ganz and McKenna 2018; Han et al. 2011; Meyer 2021; Skocpol et al. 2000; Skocpol and Oser 2004).

Despite recognition of the limited capacity of social movements to achieve their intended outcomes, Amenta et al. (2018: 454) identified main factors hypothesized to increase movement impact, including the amount, forms, and strategy of mobilization, and a variety of conditions under which movements are more or less consequential. However, Amenta and his colleagues (2010: 295, 2018: 453) conclude that data barriers are too high for social movement research to systematically address global questions about which movements have been effective politically, cross-nationally, and over time, with regard to various social and policy issues. Yet systematic conclusions have been offered in relation to maximalist campaigns (i.e., overthrowing a government) by Chenoweth (2020) regarding conditions for movement success, namely that the mobilization of a certain threshold of a population (3.5%) engaged in nonviolent protest consistently yields regime change (see also Chenoweth and Stephan 2011; Chenoweth and Belgioioso 2019). An additional important shift in research on these topics is noted in McAdam and Tarrow's (2010) discussion of research on the connection between social movements and election studies. While few earlier studies bridged the social movements literature and the electoral studies literature, scholars have begun to advance research designs that deeply examine both areas of contention (e.g., Gillion 2020; Schlozman 2015; Wasow 2020).

Informed by social movement studies, an important line of recent research on the effectiveness of political participation combines individual-level political participation measures with data on a variety of representational outcomes in the United States and cross-nationally. The shared approach of these studies is to systematically link these two types of data (individual-level participation and representational outcomes) in order to identify the nature of the connection between participation and representation. The two main representational outcome measures in this body of research include assessments of the similarity of ideology and policy preferences between citizens and leaders, as well as representation of citizens' preferences in actual policy outcome measures, such as budgetary expenditures and policy implementation. Combining data on political participation with these two measures of representational outcomes allows researchers to empirically investigate whether and how different forms of participation are associated with *congruence* (i.e., preference similarity) between citizens and representatives, and to assess the *responsiveness* of governmental actors to the policy preferences of those who are politically active in various ways (Wlezien 2004, 2017; Wlezien and Soroka 2016).

For example, in US-focused research, Gillion's (2012) study showed the impact of minority protest between 1961 and 1991 on congressional roll-call votes; and Leighley and Oser (2018) showed that participation beyond voting enhanced congruence in 2012 on the highly partisan and salient policy issue of health care reform. Examples of recent cross-national findings on this topic include Htun and Weldon's (2012) conclusion that women's mobilization in autonomous social movements has impacted policies aimed at combatting violence against women in 70 countries over four decades; Hooghe and Oser's (2016) assessment that trade union membership had a positive effect on social expenditure in OECD countries between 1980 and 2010; and Rasmussen and Reher's (2019) demonstration that civil society engagement has strengthened the relationship between public opinion and public policy across 20 policy issues in 30 European countries. These studies represent a growing body of literature that integrates individual-level data on political participation with various measures of representational outcomes to advance knowledge about whether, when, and how different forms of participation may effectively achieve intended outcomes (Ansolabehere and Kuriwaki, forthcoming; Esaiasson and Wlezien 2017; Wasow 2020).

Political Efficacy

A final key question for assessing the effectiveness of different forms of participation relates to the attitudes of political participants, and particularly the key political attitude of political efficacy. Early research investigated this topic in relation to voting, such as Fiorina's (1976) classic examination of whether voting decisions are motivated by voters' *instrumental* intentions to achieve specific policy-related outcomes, or their *expressive* intentions to state their views. Subsequent research on participation beyond the electoral arena indicates that a primary motivation is instrumental interest in policy change (e.g., Giugni 2007), though more recent research on extra-institutionalized and creative participation suggests that expressive intentions may have gained importance in recent years (e.g., Theocharis and de Moor, forthcoming). Taken together, this research indicates that individuals participate politically not only to express their views, but also to achieve instrumental outcomes.

Recent data on the effectiveness of mass protest campaigns clarifies the importance of understanding, not only levels of distinctive types of participation and related political outcomes, but also the importance of assessing whether participants feel that they are efficacious in achieving their desired outcomes. Data on the prevalence and success rates of violent versus non-violent mass campaigns since the 1930s indicate that nonviolent protest has become much more common in recent years (Chenoweth 2020: 71), but success rates have fluctuated over time, with a relative decline in the success rates of both nonviolent and violent maximalist campaigns since the early 2000s (Chenoweth 2020: 75). Chenoweth offers a number of explanations for why protest may have increased, including the possibility that more people see protest as a legitimate and successful method, as well as the possibility that people have new motivations and tools to resist due to authoritarian governments and new information technology. This research clarifies that in order to understand long-term trends in participation and representation, it is important to also assess citizens' attitudinal assessment of whether they can influence the political process.

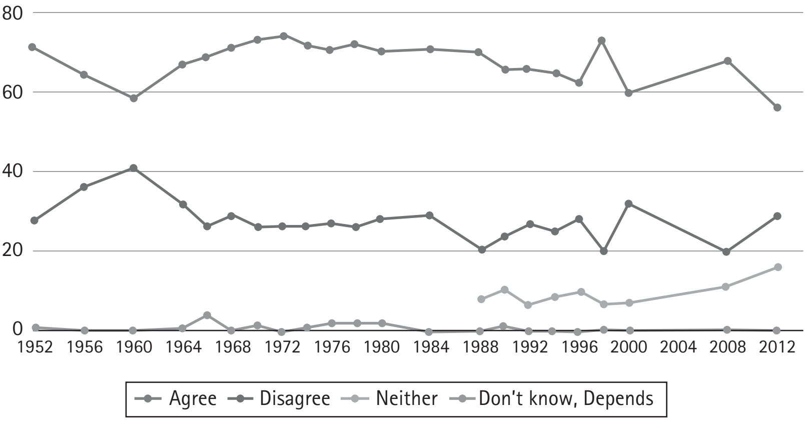
As the literature has tended to presume that political participants are motivated primarily by instrumental intentions, the key attitudinal measure in the study of the effectiveness of political participation has been political efficacy, dating back to Campbell et al.'s (1954) study of how voters make decisions. Contemporary research continues to cite Campbell et al.'s (1954: 187) classic definition of political efficacy: "the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process". By the 1990s, this line of research had witnessed an important theoretical advance when scholars noted the distinction between internal and external political efficacy. This distinction was crystallized in Niemi et al.'s (1991: 84–85) definitions of *internal efficacy*, meaning "beliefs about one's own competence to understand, and to participate effectively in, politics," and *external efficacy*, meaning "beliefs about the responsiveness of governmental authorities and institutions to citizens' demands". The most commonly cited studies on political efficacy have focused on the United States and analyze the measures from the American National Election Studies (ANES), including its time series data on political efficacy.

To illustrate trends in political efficacy, Figure 47.1 presents key indicators from the ANES data between 1952 and 2016. Figure 47.1a plots the indicator most often interpreted as measuring *internal efficacy*, and an index of *external efficacy* is plotted in Figure 27.1b. Average scores on both types of efficacy have decreased since 1952 when the questions were first asked, but the decline in the measure of external efficacy is notably steeper. The conventional wisdom is that political efficacy has declined in advanced democracies in general, though recent studies have noted that adequately investigating this topic entails significant theoretical and methodological complexity (e.g., Chamberlain 2012; Esaiasson et al. 2015).

Theoretical Framework for Researching the Effectiveness of Non-institutionalized Participation

Building on this review of the state of the art of the literature of three key topics of the study of the effectiveness of political participation (types of participation, the participation–representation connection, and political efficacy), it is clear that an updated theoretical framework is needed regarding the chain of responsiveness when the type of political act under consideration is non-institutionalized participation. To consider how citizens' non-institutionalized participation may integrate with the discrete stages and linkages of democratic responsiveness, Figure 47.2 adapts Powell's (2004: 92) linear model of the "Chain of Responsiveness" to include non-voting participation. The conceptual model in Figure 47.2 notes that non-institutionalized participation (Stage 2a), along with citizens' voting behavior (Stage 2), may augment the links between citizens' preferences (Stage 1) and the selection of policymakers and government formation (Stage 3). This linkage would occur if citizens' non-institutionalized participation acts primarily as a communication mechanism, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter, whereby citizens' activity beyond the electoral arena

(a) Politics is too complicated



(b) External political efficacy index

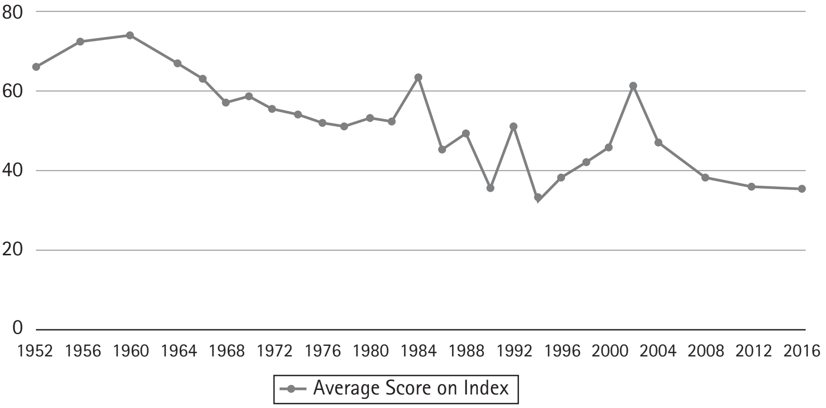


FIGURE 47.1 Political Efficacy Trends in the United States, 1952 to 2016. Figure 47.1a. Politics Is Too Complicated. Figure 47.1b. External Political Efficacy Index.

Source: American National Election Studies (2020), https://electionstudies.org/resources/anes-guide/, last accessed September 23, 2020.

Notes: The text of the item plotted in *Figure 1a* is as follows: "Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on." The index in *Figure 1b* index is based on two questions: "People like me don't have any say about what the government does" and "I don't think wpublic officials care much what people like me think."

impacts different aspects of government formation and stability. However, this expected positive linkage from non-electoral participation (Stage 2a) to selecting policymakers (Stage 3) is represented as a dashed line, as the precise causal mechanism of this linkage is less clear in comparison to the expected strong causal effect of voting behavior. The communication theory would predict a clearer direct positive linkage from citizens' non-electoral behavior to public policies and outcomes (Stage 4).

Literature on protest and political efficacy, however, clarifies that in contrast to a communication mechanism, an alternate mechanism may explain the relation between

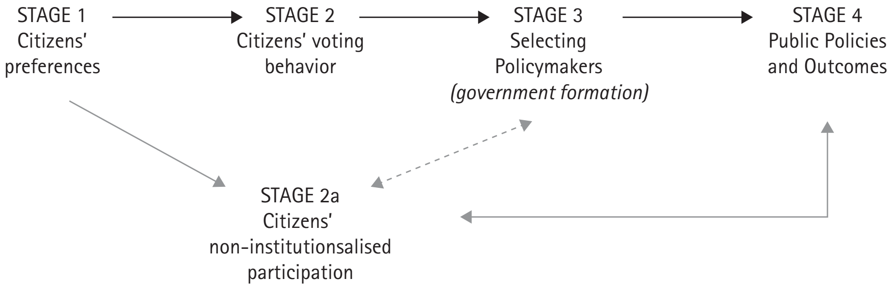


FIGURE 47.2 Chain of Democratic Responsiveness, Including Non-Electoral Participation

Notes: author's adaptation of Powell's (2004: 92) Chain of Democratic Responsiveness framework. Arrows in black represent Powell's model; arrows in grey represent author's adaptation of the model. I thank Ruth Dassonneville and Marc Hooghe for their input in developing this figure in the context of our collaborative research project on political participation and multiple policy issues (Oser et al. 2021).

non-electoral participation and governing outcomes: grievance theory predicts that citizens' non-institutionalized participation is an expression of anti-system protest (Klandermans et al. 2008; Kurer et al. 2019). This means that government formation and public policies (Stages 3 and 4) may motivate anti-system protest of citizens who oppose governing policies, and therefore the preferences of non-institutionalized participators would differ meaningfully from governing policy positions. An important area of future research is therefore to gather data and specify research designs that allow researchers to clearly identify the causal arrows that link non-electoral participation to different stages of this chain of responsiveness.

New Data, Challenges, and Opportunities

This section begins with a brief presentation of recent empirical data on over-time trends in political participation and political efficacy from the European Social Survey that highlights both challenges and opportunities for advancing future scholarship on the broad topic of the effectiveness of political participation.[1] The ESS, which researchers consider one of the highest quality cross-national social surveys (Kohler 2008), has been conducted every two years since 2002, and the resulting data are useful for understanding contemporary trends. The analysis in this section is based on the ESS cumulative file available from 2002 (Round 1) through 2016 (Round 8) (European Social Survey 2018a; 2018b) for all 15 countries that are included in every year of the ESS time series (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland).

Regarding different forms of participation, trends in Figure 47.3 show the importance of continuing to investigate the effectiveness not only of voting, but also of a whole range of

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[1] The data cleaning and coding to produce these figures used standard procedures of applying necessary weights, addressing missing values, recoding higher values to indicate higher efficacy levels, and adapting a consistent scale (0 to 1).

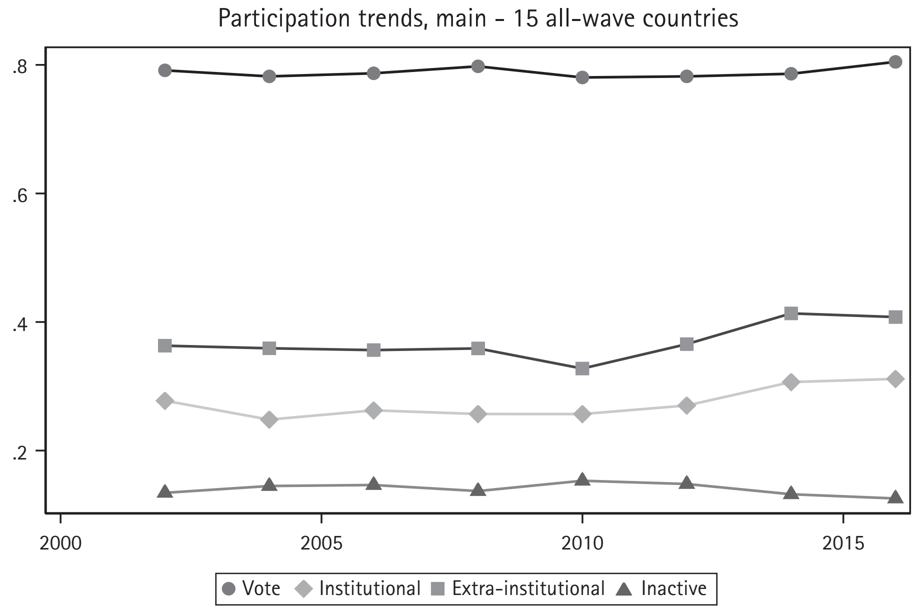

FIGURE 47.3 Participation Trends of 15 European Countries, 2002 through 2016

Source: ESS cumulative file, Rounds 1 (2002) through 8 (2016).

forms of political participation. The question regarding voting asks: "Some people don't vote nowadays for one reason or another. Did you vote in the last [country] national election in [month/year]?" The prefatory question to the battery of non-voting participation indicators reads as follows: "There are different ways of trying to improve things in [country] or help prevent things from going wrong. During the last 12 months, have you done any of the following? , , ," Consistent with prior literature (Marien et al. 2010; Oser and Hooghe 2018), the dimensional analysis of the participation indicators according to principal component analysis and Cronbach's alpha, confirms a distinction between institutionalized actions (contact, party work, and organization work) and non-institutionalized actions (petition, demonstration, and boycott) with only one ESS participation indicator not clearly aligning with either dimension (displaying a badge or sticker). The ESS data on participation trends presented in Figure 47.3 are consistent with those documented in the literature. With regard to voting, the ESS data indicate that the level of voter turnout remained stable from 2002 through 2016.[2] With regard to participation beyond voting, both institutionalized actions and non-institutionalized actions have increased in recent years. As discussed in relation to the conceptual model in Figure 47.2, this increase in non-voting activity may be the result of a *communication* mechanism due to individuals' intentional choice to use these forms of participation to influence decision makers. Alternatively, this increase in non-voting participation may be the result of a *grievance* mechanism, due to individuals becoming frustrated with the political system, in a manner akin to blowing off steam with no expectation of influencing representational outcomes.

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[2] Even when analyses use high-quality survey data from the ESS, estimates of turnout levels are higher than actual voting rates. The literature indicates this is likely due to the well-documented tendency of respondents to overreport their voting records (due to social desirability bias), and because it is difficult to obtain a truly representative sample of the population.

Proceeding to trends in political efficacy, Table 47.1 contains the full set of political efficacy questions asked in the ESS from 2002 through 2016. The mean values for these indicators over time for all countries that participated in Rounds 1 through 8 of the ESS are presented in Figure 47.4. As with the participation indicators, these mean measures are intended to provide summary trend information on the available survey data in the ESS without controlling for covariates. The first four rounds of the ESS (2002-2008) included two questions about topics often associated with *internal efficacy*, namely the ease of "making up one's mind" and how often "politics seems complicated." In the literature, the former is consistently interpreted as measuring internal efficacy, while the latter is generally interpreted as falling between internal and external efficacy (e.g., Niemi et al. 1991). Figure 47.4a shows the trend lines for responses to these two questions from 2002 to 2008, which indicate little fluctuation during this period.

Regarding *external* efficacy, Figure 47.4b shows the trend lines for a new set of political efficacy questions fielded by the ESS in Rounds 7 and 8 (fielded in 2014 and 2016). These questions were designed to introduce new questions to the survey regarding system responsiveness (external efficacy), to complement the ESS's existing efficacy questions' focus on subjective competence (internal efficacy).[3] Figure 47.4c homes in on the 2016 data by showing the average scores for all indicators for each country. The mean scores on this scale, which ranges from 0 to 1, indicate meaningful cross-national variance, with the lowest mean efficacy levels around 0.2, and those with the highest mean levels around 0.4. Given the changes in ESS measures over time, the most reliable and commonly used data source for European social and political issues cannot give insights into long-term trends. However, cross-national variation in these efficacy measures can be analyzed along with additional measures in future research to assess whether political participants in various contexts have levels of efficacy that align with the "communication" versus "grievance" mechanisms.

This brief summary of survey data about political participation and political efficacy in countries surveyed in every available round of the ESS cumulative data highlights just one of the many challenges facing researchers who investigate topics related to the effectiveness of political participation outside of the United States. The lack of consistent political efficacy measures in the ESS cumulative data is mirrored in many high-quality cross-national surveys around the globe, and stands in contrast to the more consistent cross-national time series data that are available for other important attitudinal concepts, such as political trust—though a few high-quality longitudinal surveys do include consistent measures of political efficacy over time (e.g., the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and the International Social Survey Programme). Research projects such as the Survey Data Recycling (SDR) project have already produced data harmonization measures for a variety of sociodemographic and attitudinal indicators (Słomczyński et al. 2016; Słomczyński and Tomescu-Dubrow 2018; Tomescu-Dubrow and Słomczyński 2016). Although these efforts have not yet included

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[3] ESS Round 8 Question Design Template of new political efficacy items, last accessed September 23, 2020: https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/docs/methodology/core_ess_questionnaire/ESS8_political_efficacy_final_template.pdf.

Table 47.1 Political efficacy measures over time, European Social Survey

Variable name	ESS rounds	Question	Categories
polcmpl	1,2,3,4	How often does politics seem so complicated that you can't really understand what is going on?	1 Never … 5 Frequently
poldcs	1,2,3,4	How difficult or easy do you find it to make your mind up about political issues?	1 Very difficult … 5 Very easy
psppsgv	7	How much would you say the political system in [country] allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?	0 Not at all … 10 Completely
psppsgva	8	How much would you say the political system in [country] allows people like you to have a say in what the government does?	1 Not at all … 5 A great deal
actrolg	7	How able do you think you are to take an active role in a group involved with political issues?	0 Not at all able … 10 Completely able
actrolga	8	How able do you think you are to take an active role in a group involved with political issues?	1 Not at all able… 5 Completely able
psppipl	7	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?	0 Not at all … 10 Completely
psppipla	8	And how much would you say that the political system in [country] allows people like you to have an influence on politics?	1 Not at all … 5 A great deal
cptppol	7	And using this card, how confident are you in your own ability to participate in politics?	0 Not at all confident… 10 Completely confident
cptppola	8	And how confident are you in your own ability to participate in politics?	1 Not at all confident … 5 Completely confident

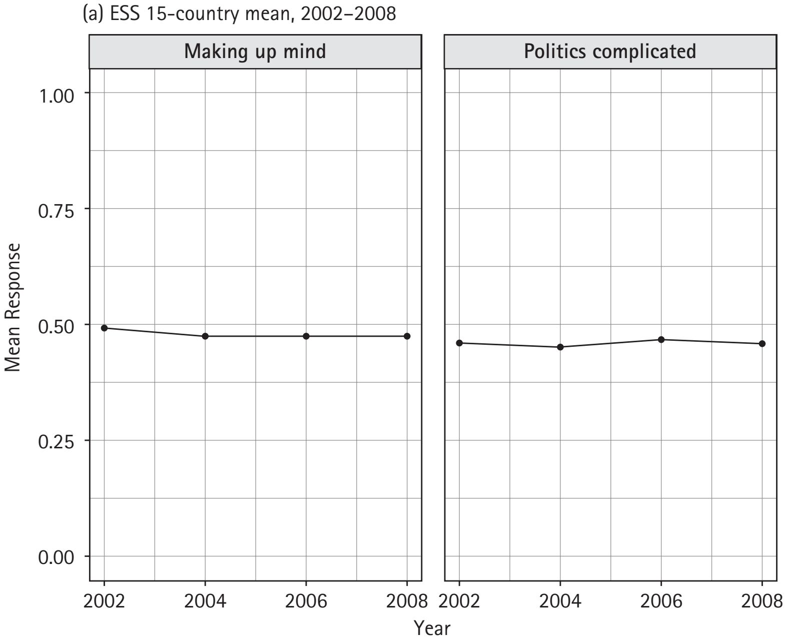


FIGURE 47.4 ESS Example Indicators of Political Efficacy

See Table 47.1 for the full wording of efficacy questions for all ESS waves.

FIGURE 47.4A ESS 15-country mean, 2002–2008

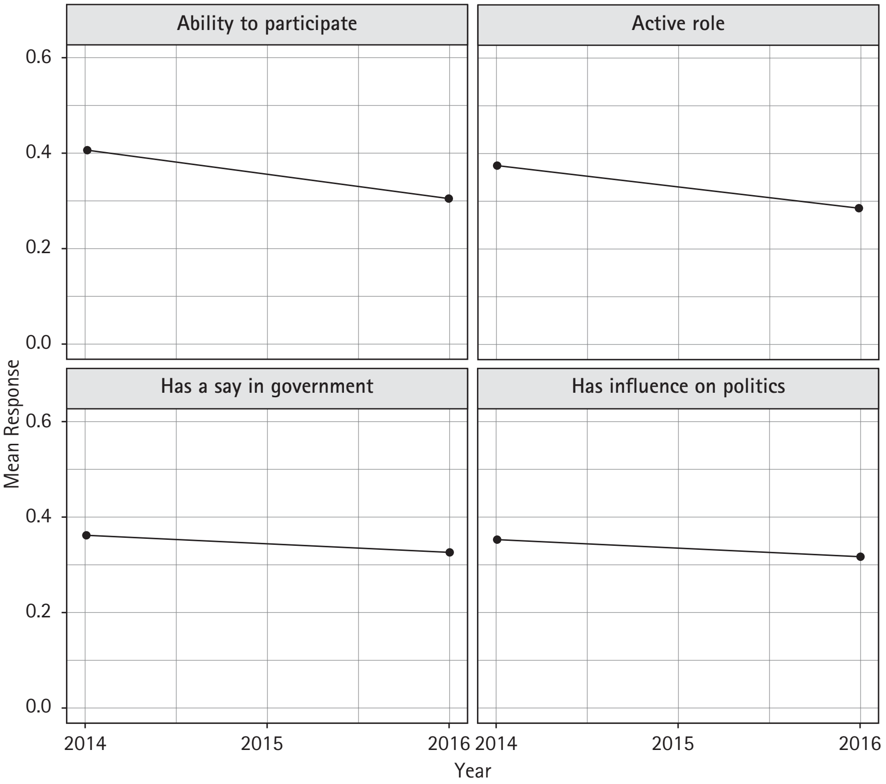
Source: Author's analysis of ESS cumulative file.

political efficacy indicators, publications from the SDR project provide a road map for how to conduct this sort of harmonization, and show why doing so is important.

CONCLUSION

This brief sketch of recent data on political participation and political efficacy sheds light on the challenges involved in advancing research on these topics, and on opportunities to meet these challenges. As noted, researchers have traditionally used two primary research designs to assess the effectiveness of different forms of political participation: case studies of social movements, and analysis of observational survey-based research. Recent advances in both data availability and methodological techniques have created opportunities to employ a variety of research designs to investigate multiple aspects of the effectiveness of participation. Innovative research designs include the analysis patterns of social media topics of citizens and politicians (Barbera et al. 2019), contentious episode analysis (Bojar and Kriesi 2021), longitudinal panel studies on activists' attitudes and behaviors (Henderson and Han, forthcoming), multi-methods research on referendums (Werner et al. 2020; Werner 2020), field experiments of effective organization practices

(b) ESS, 15-country mean, 2014 and 2016



(c) Efficacy mean levels in 15 countries in 2016

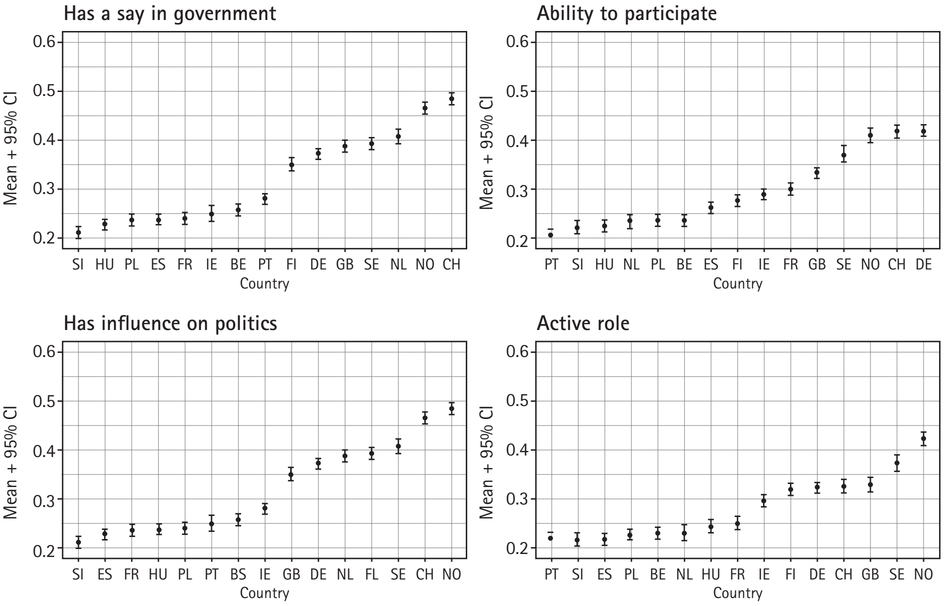


FIGURE 47.4B ESS, 15-country mean, 2014 and 2016

FIGURE 47.4C Efficacy mean levels in 15 countries in 2016

Source: Author's analysis of the ESS cumulative file. Country name abbreviations: Belgium (BE), Switzerland (CH), Germany (DE), Spain (ES), Finland (FI), France (FR), Great Britain (GB), Hungary (HU), Ireland (IE), Netherlands (NL), Norway (NO), Poland, (PL), Portugal (PT), Sweden (SE), Slovenia (SI).

(Baldassari and Abascal 2017; Han 2016), experimental investigation of the effectiveness of different types of protests (Shuman et al., forthcoming), lab experiments (Bol 2019), survey experiments (Sniderman 2018), online experiments (Shmargad and Klar 2019), and research on elite decision-making (Sheffer et al. 2018; Wouters and Walgrave 2017). Combining these approaches with more traditional qualitative and observational research designs can produce results that offer insights about the causal mechanisms that link participation, political efficacy, and political outcomes.

Increased investment in multi-year and collaborative projects and research institutes in recent years has better equipped researchers to conduct innovative and mixed-methods investigations that identify new descriptive and causal evidence on these topics, such as Rasmussen's project on advocacy in digital democracy (ERC 2019); Kriesi's project on political conflict in Europe following the Great Recession (Kriesi 2013); Klandermans' project on how citizens try to influence politics (Klandermans 2020); Walgrave's study of the information processing of political actors (ERC 2020); the Center for Social Media and Politics' (2020) examination of the impact of social media; the MIT Governance Lab's (2020) investigation of these topics with a regional focus on Asia and Africa; and the Agora Institute and the P3 lab led by Han (e.g., Han et al. 2021).

The urgent need to invest in research on the effectiveness of political participation is clear in light of multiple contemporary crises of democratic legitimacy. Contemporary global headlines featured a number of major governing crises, including the continued global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic despite governing attempts to curb it, and vigorous public protests in the US and worldwide (Gose and Skocpol 2019). Despite these challenges we are also witnessing a golden age of research on these topics, with scholars continuing to develop tools to investigate the consequences of political participation, a task that Verba and Nie (1972) presciently described as the most difficult yet most important topic in the field. Recent research identifies multiple urgent concerns related to contemporary democratic functioning, including phenomena of representational inequality (Lupu and Warner, in forthcoming-a, in forthcoming-b; Rosset and Stecker 2019; Schakel, forthcoming), populism (Gidron and Hall 2020), and democratic erosion (Lührmann and Lindberg 2019). These trends highlight the importance of continuing to invest in research on whether, when, and how political participation is effective in achieving intended outcomes. The scientific advances described in this chapter provide a roadmap for fulfilling the imperative to continue to break new ground on this topic.

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PART IX

CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

CHAPTER 48

CHANGING MEDIA LANDSCAPES AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

MARCELO SANTOS AND SEBASTIÁN VALENZUELA

For most citizens, politics is a mediated experience. Television, online news sites, and social media are central to how people learn about the political world. Thus, any review of contemporary trends in political participation requires an analysis of current media landscapes and how these impact on political participation patterns, dodging utopian and dystopian accounts of technological determinism. In a quantitative review, Boulianne (2018) analyzed more than 300 published studies on the relationship between digital media and political participation, covering a 20-year period, 50 countries, and survey data from more than 300,000 respondents. Her results show a positive, albeit weak, relationship between the diffusion of digital media and political participation, both off and online. To understand current forms of political participation, then, one must consider the contemporary media landscape, in which digital media and social media platforms have become central to citizens around the world.

The purpose of the current chapter is to critically review how recent changes in media landscapes intersect with different dimensions of political participation. To do so, we begin by discussing the transition from mass, traditional media to networked, digital media. Then we focus on three dimensions of media systems—consumption, production, and circulation of content—and present six game changers triggered by the digital revolution. We then link such transformations with potential effects on political participation, and close with a discussion of future developments in this area.

From Mass Media to Digital Media

For most of the twentieth century, the relationship between media and political participation followed a rather hierarchical, top-down logic. The power of the media over citizens was signaled by a plethora of effect theories that conceived a one-directional influence from the mass media to the public, including gatekeeping, framing, priming, agenda setting, spiral of silence, cultivation, two-step flow, and so on (see, e.g., Oliver et al. 2019). The power of the media was a consequence of mass communication, which Greenberg and Salwen (2014: 62) defined as "the diffusion of messages from a seemingly powerful, single source to a large, heterogenous audience; the public nature of the messages; and the lack of (or delayed) feedback from receivers to the mass communication source." While the contemporary digital environment has rendered this description outdated, it highlights three dimensions of media landscapes that are still relevant: consumption, production, and circulation.

Digital, in turn, means binary, programmable data (Manovich, 2005). This fundamental change on the material nature of the structures behind digital communication technologies brings forward affordances such as: (i) *reproducibility of content*, as opposed to analogous data contained in physical media, such as books, disks, and so on; (ii) *data storing and processing*, which allows for the creation of multiple, dynamic, significant relations between data points; (iii) *interoperability*, meaning data can be accessed and manipulated from different devices, remotely accessed; and (iv) *interactivity*, which refers to the "reciprocal communication or information exchange, which afford interaction between communication technology and users, or between users through technology" (Bucy and Tao 2007: 647).

Affordances alter the consumption, production, and circulation of media content, thus transforming political participation too. Data reproducibility impacts content circulation because information can now be seamlessly stored, copied, edited, and so on. Data storing also translates into trackability, as every user interaction is a potential data point that can be accumulated and then processed by algorithms for different purposes, from customized news feeds to contextualized advertising, affecting both political information circulation and consumption. Interoperability means that different devices have access to the same sources as content adapts to the device, also affecting consumption. In addition, interoperability suggests that content can be created by different media platforms from the platforms used to consume it—for instance a mobile phone video stream feeding a live TV newscast. When combined with interactivity, these practices have an impact on both content outputs (as digital media allow for production, circulation, and commentary by myriads of sources) and inputs (as digital consumption practices may include different forms of feedback), especially as digital platforms become more user-friendly. Indeed, Earl and Kenski argue, in chapter 26 of this volume, that affordances themselves change pathways to online activism, sometimes offering new possibilities as they enable new or enhanced practices that lead or are themselves forms of political participation and oftentimes constraining through new modes of 'internet enabled repression'; one way or the other, they definitely change many rules of the game, as we will see.

In the next section, we highlight six game changers in media landscapes, followed by a discussion on how they transformed political participation.

Six Game Changers

Information Overload

Digital media accelerated the transition from an environment of information scarcity to one of information overload. The diversity of information sources, which was initially celebrated as a step forward in the democratization of the public sphere (Shirky 2008; Castells 2009; Zuckerman 2014), has become a challenge in terms of access to reliable, high-quality, political information (Lewandowsky et al. 2017). Information disorders such as misinformation and disinformation have grown exponentially, contaminating the media environment and challenging the ability of online users to find accurate political information (Wardle and Derakhshan 2017).

Information overload is one of the many consequences of a high-choice media environment. Others include increasing the fragmentation and polarization of political attitudes, factual relativism, and inequalities in political knowledge (Van Aelst et al. 2017: 19).

Changing Habits of Media Use

Media habits have changed dramatically in the twenty-first century. These changes have operated at the level of devices employed—from electronic mass media to digital computers and mobile devices—as well as forms of information exposure. While the latter has always ranged from purposive to incidental (Kligler-Vilenchik et al. 2020), the rise of algorithms created by private platforms such as Facebook has altered information exposure. Designed as tools for user engagement, algorithms allow us to carry our content preferences with us. Thus, the popularity of platforms has led to a growing "Matthew Effect" (Kümpel 2020), where people who are already politically interested become more exposed to political information both incidentally and intentionally, whereas those who have little to no interest are less exposed to political content. Consequently, political inequalities on social media have grown (Kümpel 2020; Thorson 2020).

Adding another layer of complexity, mobile instant messaging services (MIMs) are becoming modal platforms for political information (and misinformation), informal political discussion, and collective action co-ordination, particularly in countries of the Global South (Goel et al. 2018; Milan and Barbosa 2020; Valenzuela et al. 2021). Though MIMs were designed originally as interpersonal communication tools, specific affordances such as Telegram's channels and WhatsApp groups have enabled one-to-many broadcasting and bipartite networks to spread political content to peripheral groups (dos Santos et al. 2019).

A consequence of changes in media use is the risk that citizens' political decision-making processes rely less on institutionalized sources of information. As the boundaries between professional news media and social media contacts blur, it is becoming increasingly difficult for most users to distinguish high-quality information sources from low-quality ones (Qiu et al. 2017).

Crisis of Media Business Models

In terms of content production, the digital revolution triggered a crisis in the economic model of news media organizations, which still produce most of the political content consumed by users. Although traditional media have appropriated social media as outlets to attract traffic and publicize their content, Google, Facebook, and Amazon get most of the advertising revenue (Sterling 2019). News media companies have struggled to adapt to a platform logic, where speed and virality of content often prevail over verification and quality.

Additionally, several countries have witnessed a long-term decline in public confidence in the news media, especially in Europe and the Americas (Newman et al. 2020; Tandoc et al. 2018). To the degree that low trust reduced news media use, the viability of journalistic organizations that have historically provided the bulk of political information remains perilous.

From Audiences to Content Creators

As the economic and cultural context that shapes digital media incorporates the user as a content creator (Wunsch and Vincent 2007), such technologies become pervasive in what Ganesh and Stohl (2013) call *digital ubiquity*. In such context, audiences interchange roles, sliding from content consumers to commentators to producers, publishers, advertisers, and so on (Ridell 2012). One outcome of these changes is the exponential growth of user-generated content (UGC, see for instance Santos, 2021) through platforms such as social media. Though UGC could be more limited in reach in the context of political participation (Santos 2018), it may still have greater aesthetic appeal (Pantti 2013) and be perceived as more authentic (Allan 2014). Because it differs markedly from professional media narratives, it challenges the prevailing forms and practices of the so-called mainstream media.

UGC usually presents little or no contextual information regarding the creation of the content and its transmission (Mortensen 2015), presenting challenges to validate or verify the claims made around the content: its location, timestamp, authorship, and so on. UGC may be verified by journalists and fact-checking organizations, but the evidence regarding the impact of such work on correcting misperceptions is mixed (Walter et al. 2019).

New Agents of Information Sharing

Within the dimension of content circulation, information technologies have become politically contested. Debates about internet neutrality and algorithmic accountability are two poignant examples. The current state of affairs is diverse around the world: while Chile has the first law in the world that allegedly protects net neutrality (Santos 2012) and Europe has advanced in protecting citizens' data with the General Data Protect Regulation (GDPR), there are no established global standards. Furthermore, the ability of national and supranational institutions to enforce such type of regulation is debatable (S. Livingstone, personal communication, November 16, 2020).

Digital and social media seem to operate with a "Wild West" logic where the same platforms have become the auditors of its business operations (Hintz 2015). The problem generated by the absence of some sort of accountability of algorithms that mediate users' access to their content feeds has been highlighted in the past few years. This became manifest after the Cambridge Analytica scandal, when as many as 87 million users had their data mined in unauthorized ways by a private company to orchestrate several political propaganda campaigns (Lapowsky 2018). As a consequence, platforms have gradually shut down access to their data by third parties, including researchers (Bruns 2018).

User Cues

As platforms harvest users' interactions and process them with algorithms that personalize content display dynamics, newsfeeds and dashboards have become individually customized information systems. These systems are based on the information introduced by users, combined with cues and signals interpreted by the platforms' algorithms when users interact with them.

While there is vast criticism of social media algorithms, the practice of "gaming" such algorithms for commercial or political purposes has led to a quick growth of non-human users, managed to boost, challenge, praise or loathe content. Networks of *bots* (automated systems) and *cyborgs* (humans doing repetitive tasks with fake users) work to manipulate the systems in order to pave the way to the content or ideas they work or praise for—alternatively, they may work against a set of users, issues and so forth, in what Treré (2016) called "algorithmic manufacturing of consent". Public opinion founded on the salience of issues that circulate on social media might, thus, be compromised. Platforms' response for such forms of manipulation of content diffusion dynamics are, to date, tepid. Additionally, users tend to share content that they have not read (Holmström et al. 2019), which may help the spread of false claims and rumors.

Influence of Media Changes on Political Participation

Giugni and Grasso argue in the introduction of this Handbook that political participation is "finely intermeshed with the very meaning and lifeblood of democracy itself". To properly engage in political activities, though, citizens need relevant, opportune, and reliable information (Delli Carpini and Keeter 1996). Historically, informal conversations, first, and the news media, later, were the main sources of political information for citizens. In developed democracies, the history of news-making is typically divided into an initial period where news content was predominantly partisan, mingled with propaganda and advertisement, and a second moment where news became gradually professionalized, and organizations became predominantly profit-oriented and politically moderate (Schudson 1998). Of course, the news media took a different path in regions such as Latin America, where media systems remain "captured" by economic and political elites (Guerrero and Márquez-Ramírez 2004), or in countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia—perhaps most notoriously perceived in China—where autocratic regimes hold a tight control over the news media. Despite these cross-national differences, the rise of digital technologies has transformed news media systems across the globe. With it, the relationship between media use and political participation has changed, too. In this section, we review this relationship as it changes according to different participation forms.

Electoral Participation

Initially, digital campaigns followed the logic of broadcasting, using the new channels for the diffusion of information. When the political world realized the potential of interactivity, new forms of digital campaigning ensued, such as crowdfunding. The 2008 US election, particularly Barack Obama's campaign, was probably the best example of this second wave of political digitization (Carr 2008). This rather optimistic perspective of digital media and elections gave way, however, to a current, more pessimistic perspective on the role played by digital technologies in elections. Thus, social media have been used for state-sponsored campaigns of digital propaganda, unauthorized manipulation of personal data, inorganic inflation of politicians' followers and messages by automated or semi-automated agents, and the channeling of official communication into alternative digital channels with the intent to avoid accountability with traditional media. Brazilian right-winger Jair Bolsonaro, for instance, gave his first speech as president elect via Facebook Live.

Another visible trend in the realm of electoral participation is related to how changes in media landscapes have deepened the personalization of politics (Adam and Mayer 2010). Social media "appear as a perfect reflection of the condition of individualization (Bauman 2001; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) of contemporary societies, allowing us to deal with others while not having to engage fully with them" (Gerbaudo 2012: 13). If citizens have been paying more attention to the person, not the party, the possibility of being informed directly by such person through individual channels allows bypassing scrutiny by traditional watchdogs such as media or NGOs. Analogously, rather than following the media, users face the possibility of following the journalist; instead of following the movement, follow the activist (Santos and Condeza 2017).

Individualization also manifests in networked dynamics, for example when individual overly intense activity become Bastos and Mercea's "serial activists" (2016), or when a user's strategic position on the network that could lead her to a more relevant role on the diffusion of information (Santos and Condeza 2017), at the same time obfuscating the agency of the traditional institutions, such as media, parties, and social movements. Additionally, self-expression mingles with political participation as an abundant production of personal imagery pops on social media during protests (Santos 2018). It is part of what Theocharis (2015) calls digitally networked participation, where the very act of communicating is a form of mobilization; and such communication entails an important element of self-expression and identity-related elements. As a young interviewee said to *The Economist* (2019), "Activism has become one of the easiest way to project yourself as cool," as young people attempt to craft a political *desirable self* (Polletta and Jasper 2001) on their digital networks.

While enabling to engage directly with the "real" person of interest, there are consequences for the excessive dependency on a personality rather than a representative organization. Though the recent rise of populist politics is associated mainly as a result of a cultural backlash after a few decades of progressive social advances and economic crisis (Inglehart and Norris 2016), social media allows political actors to bypass journalistic scrutiny, weakening accountability and dialogue, not only by not engaging but also by aggressively accusing professional media of being "fake" (Walter et al. 2019).

Protest Participation

The use of digital technologies has promoted decentralized forms of mobilization. Some authors rely on the network metaphor (see, for instance, section "Digital Networks" on chapter 41 on this volume) as they refer to digitally networked forms of participation (Theocharis 2015) or networked movements (Castells 2012), in which citizens rely less on traditional organizations with a definite set of values and more on the horizontal networks of peers. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) define the "logics of connective action", in reference to Mancur Olson's ([1965] 2002) logics of collective action. For these authors, there is a continuum from traditional social movements that rely on strong demands, agreed by a closely tied group, to different levels of flexibility, where personal action frames, that is, flexible, inclusive frames to the issues, are claimed by networked constituents, brought together by low-to-intense mediation of technology. The low barriers, topic flexibility, and the intensive adoption of digital technology also enable the transnationalization of protest, leading to phenomena such as the "serial activists" detected by Bastos and Mercea (2016) on Twitter—probably generalizable to other social media platforms. The authors claim that regular users engage with a very high frequency with a variety of social issues, regardless of the latitude where the issue takes place.

The tenuous nature of social movement frames and groups connected mainly via digital social networks allow for a faster diffusion of calls for action while also allow a loosening of the original impulse for participation and the adoption of predominant frames. Porto and Brant (2015) and Pinto (2017) argue that that was the case during the 2013 decentralized popular mobilization in Brazil's *jornadas de junho* (June events). As protests became more massive, demands originally associated with the left (urban public free transportation) lost focus and were co-opted by the opposition to spark a generalized discontent against PT, the ruling left-wing party. As such, these protests might have led to contradictory outputs such as the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff in Brazil in 2016 or the counter-revolution in Egypt after the downfall of Hosni Mubarak in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. In the words of the formerly techno-optimistic Wael Ghonim (2015) "I once said, 'If you want to liberate a society, all you need is the Internet.' I was wrong".

Still, it is difficult to measure the long-term effects of techno-centered forms of political participation. For instance, the Chilean student movement of 2011 exhibited a strong use of digital technology (Valenzuela et al. 2014) and was successful in bringing about a major reform to educational policy. However, this movement also had a strong presence on the streets, with massive demonstrations, and four of the student leaders became elected to Congress as deputies (more on outcomes of political participation on Part VIII on this volume). Gerbaudo (2012: 5–6), studying the *Occupy* movement in the United States, concluded that digital media were instrumental to what he called choreographies of assembly: "They are means not simply to convey abstract opinions, but also to give a shape to the way in which people come together and act together" led by "soft leaders [such as] influential Facebook admins and activist tweeps".

In explicating how social media use might affect political participation, the literature offers four prominent explanations (Boulianne 2015). One holds that digital networks increase exposure to "weak ties," augmenting users' likelihood of both learning about opportunities to participate and being asked to participate in civic life (Gil de Zúñiga et al. 2012). Secondly, users learn about news from what other users post, and since they are exposed to the news incidentally by their contacts, this type of information may be influential (Bode 2012). Thus, social platforms may enable citizens to learn about political issues, which facilitates participation in civic life (Xenos et al. 2014). Third, users in social media have more chances to be contacted by political organizations, and through this contact, be asked to participate on their behalf. And fourth, participation is contagious among users of social media, as they are affected by contacts who post political opinions (Bond et al. 2012).

Existing research shows that social media can influence political participation through several mechanisms, including cognitive elaboration, information gain, political discussion, and group identity (Gil de Zúñiga et al. 2012; Valenzuela 2013). Research about political uses of Twitter during election time has shown that this platform not only engages partisan individuals who try to extend their offline political reach (Jungherr 2015), but also involves racial and secular minorities in the political process by either broadcasting information on the campaign or having conversations with others, and these interactions mobilize and acknowledge them (Graham et al. 2013).

The lowered costs of participation may seem attractive to democracy defenders as it projects shiny images such as that "here comes everybody" (Shirky 2008), the "architecture of participation" (O'Reilly 2013) or the "participatory" dimension embedded on Ethan Zuckerman's "new civics" (2014). However, while digital technologies reduce the cost of joining causes and publicizing information, fostering the creation and enabling the maintenance of connections, its adoption as a form of political participation has been contemptuously labeled "slacktivism" (Morozov 2012). In other words, the slacktivism hypothesis assumes that such new forms of political expression are naïvely perceived as more impactful than they are, therefore discouraging offline participation. Though there is evidence of a largely positive relationship between social media use and political participation (Boulianne 2015), Kwak et al. (2018) suggest that such correlation is fragile as it is not perceived in young people nor in those with politically diverse networks.

Additionally, the lower barriers represent an opportunity also seized by other agents with less strictly democratic inspiration, in what Quandt (2018) calls "dark participation": "negative, selfish or even deeply sinister contributions (. . .) to the news-making processes". As such, dark participation amalgamates: "(a) wicked *actors*, (b) sinister *motives and reasons for participation*, (c) despicable *objects/targets*, (d) intended *audience*(s), and (e) nefarious *processes/actions*" (Quandt, 2018: 41, emphasis on the original). Within this definition, many recent examples qualify, such as ISIL's infamous beheading videos that became viral on social media thanks to botnets (Al-khateeb and Agarwal 2015), "Unite the Right" Charlottesville deadly rally (Fausset and Feuer 2017), 4Chan's QAnon conspiracists (Moore 2018), or Reddit's misogynistic Red Pill community initiated by former New Hampshire State Representative Robert Fisher (Bacarisse 2017).

The Public Role of Private Platforms

As digital platforms have become a quintessential part of people's communication environment, they become also instrumental to citizen's political activities. As previously discussed, such activities include democratic as well as antidemocratic behaviors, nevertheless they are regulated almost exclusively by the platforms, relying on their resources and will to enforce their terms and policies, which were not at all designed for political participation (see more on this on Bridgman and Stolle's analysis of Digital Networks on chapter 41). As digital media entrepreneurs self-label their products as "platforms," they attempt to dodge the responsibilities assigned historically and legally to media outlets and position themselves as neutral entities (Gillespie 2010).

In spite of that, research shows plenty of politically motivated activity in the so-called platforms. The messaging app WhatsApp, for instance has been used for social mobilization (Treré 2020; Milan and Barbosa 2020), and the dissemination of disinformation related both to racism (Goel et al. 2018), and to electoral processes (Gragnani 2017). Another MIM, Telegram, has been associated with terrorist practices (Karasz 2018) and Nazi propaganda (Bedingfield 2020), while it is also widely recognized as a political actor in defense of freedom of speech and privacy (Santos et al., 2021) and the most important platform for activism in Iran (Kargar and McManamen 2018; Akbari and Gabdulhakov 2019) and other countries with more surveillant regimes. Gursky et al. (2020) called the systematic political manipulation of messages through encrypted messaging apps "encrypted propaganda," as they unveiled influence operations in Mexico, India, and United States.

Semi-public Facebook has been on the eye of the lawmakers particularly in the United States due to the Cambridge Analytica revelations related to 2016 elections in that country (Cadwalladr and Graham-Harrison 2018). After profiling micro-segments following psychographic assessments built over leaked private Facebook user information, the consulting company customized political messages for the Trump 2016 presidential campaign, Brexit, and others. While the magnitude of the effects of such strategies are an ongoing debate, so are the ethical aspects of this kind of Big Data approach to politics (see more about Big Data research ethics applied to the field on Pavan's chapter 18 on this volume), forged on irregularly obtained data, appealing to the emotional fragility of the users, and detected because the users' emotional cues are collected by a platform such as Facebook. One of WhatsApp's founders and former Facebook shareholder Brian Acton broadcasted on Twitter: "It is time. #deletefacebook."

These events reveal the other side of the personalization issue: not only user data is analyzed to customize the content feed, recommendations and so on, it is also used to create commercial, political, or other sorts of advertising content in a sort of artisanal-massive political communication practice, where micro-segmentation is combined with psychographic profiling, and messages are crafted for very specific targets with customized persuasive messages either for commercial purposes or political propaganda (González 2017; Risso 2018). The effects of such practice are yet to be measured convincingly (Santos, 2019), but as famous Cambridge Analytica whistleblower Christopher Wylie said, metaphorically: "There's not a debate on how much illegal drug you took (. . .) If you're caught cheating, you lose your medal" (Amer and Noujaim 2019).

The lack of regulation on the infrastructural level also has an impact on the dynamics of access to political information. Commercial practices such as zero rating promotions[1]—and free, but restricted access to internet-selected content in services—such as Facebook's *FreeBasics*, for instance, create siloes of "free" information from restricted sources, while the rest of the internet is paid for.

As digital platforms step aside from their public role, an ongoing struggle emerges between platform self-regulation, state regulation, and growing pressure for enforcement of citizen media literacies, such as the competencies to identify, scrutinize, and avoid disinformation. Amidst all those variables, it is no secret that digital divides will only increase inequalities when considering the competencies needed to exercise political participation in, through, or with digital media environments. It has become increasingly evident that regulation is a complex but inevitable road, as the free market of digital mediators sinks in oceans of disinformation and operations of social manipulation.

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[1] To attract clients, especially low-income users with pre-paid plans, some Internet Service Providers (ISP) do not charge data traffic for certain apps such as WhatsApp and social media platforms. For a detailed discussion on the restricted free access such as zero rating and Free Basics and its conflicts with net neutrality, refer to Galpaya (2017).

The social role of digital technology is also visible in the form of e-politics as technology enables different approaches to deliberative processes. These may take advantage of digitization to make decision making and bureaucratic processes faster, more efficient, and in some cases even more inclusive, or may involve new dimensions of participation, such as opening data to citizen scrutiny.

In the first case, pre-existing participatory processes such as consultations, petitions, budgeting, and voting are taken to the digital realm, where technology not so much changes their shape, but changes their speed, accuracy, efficiency, and efficacy, all as a function of the populations access and skills related to technology. Such participatory processes are not novel, and digital technology assumes a mediating role. We could say they are digitized participative political processes.

In the second case, though, digital technology has a more prominent role since it enables unpredicted uses to information delivered by means of open government initiatives. If the Watergate scandal was brought up by investigative reporters, today's watchdogs are more likely data social scientists, crossing data patterns, linking networks of interest, visualizing epidemic dynamics—such as has been done in the aftermath of the Covid-19 outbreak—or identifying far-right, white supremacist, and neo-Nazi individuals and monitoring the success or failure of legal action against them (Levin 2020).

One way or the other, Iceland's failure to institutionalize a crowdsourced grassroots constitutional experience in 2011 (Landemore 2014) proves that political processes and institutions are not to be substituted by technologies and alternative forms of organization; instead, they should be integrated.

Conclusion

Communication history has shown that salvationist accounts of technology as a cure-it-all solution are reoccurring (Marvin 1988; Pavlíčková 2012). It has also shown that the effects of such technologies go beyond a simplistic interpretation of that technology in particular. The emotional impact of such sort of innovation frequently exceeds its cognitive effects. For example, the infamous tale that the display of "The Arrival of a Train" by the Lumière brothers had people running away on fear that the train would come off the wall was dismantled by Gunning (1985). Also, just after World War II, Lazarsfeld et al. (1948) proved that media effects on political behavior are conditioned and limited, rather than the common-sense, theory-non-theory perspective (as defined by Wolf 1994) that the media operate as a hypodermic needle or a magic bullet that has direct, uniform, short-term effects on individuals.

What seems to be the point of connection here is that new communication technologies go as far as to bring about changes. But what kind of changes? Changes on what to achieve or changes on how to achieve them? There are definitely positive and negative effects according to the predominant set of values and social norms of the times and geopolitical region in which they are inserted—for instance, democratic liberal values in the case of most Western nations—as well as macro variables such as political and media systems or regulation and enforcement systems. This *dialectical approach to changes in media landscapes* contrasting pros and cons is but a starting point to any research dealing with the impact they may have on political participation.

Furthermore, the innovative environment into which digital media are inserted demand a continuous follow-up by the researchers: technologies change, valid methods change, means of social appropriation change, regulations change, and so on, in a chain of effects that turn *digital media into a moving target*. An integrated and creative approach (refer to chapter 18 and 41 for some more notes on digital methods) to the relationship between those dimensions is bound to be beneficial to the research. For example, one perspective may be too optimistic about the contribution by users on their social media channels as to the democratization of media, fostering diversity of sources and pluralism of perspectives. That is, because the same phenomenon has as diametrically opposed side-effect the information overload, one of the foundational technological issues that help set the stage for the disinformation pandemic we have been facing over the last decade or so.

Finally, though there are definitely a myriad of new instruments, techniques, and technologies in the current media landscapes as compared to pre-digital or even 10 years ago, it remains a field in which political actors dispute the meaning or the framing of events, the salience of issues, and visibility of actors, whether they are disputed with traditional public relations firms, paid advertisement, image events (Delicath and DeLuca 2003), news gatekeeping, or with streams of tweets, posts, and memes, published by journalists, ordinary users, bots, or cyborgs and live streams of personal or professional mobile cameras, mediated by human, algorithmic, or mixed editors or—perhaps the most realistic option—all of the above, intertwined as offline and online borders blur, as argued by Earl and Kenski claim in chapter 26. As important as the pursuit of innovative interpretations of the relationship between the new landscapes of media and political participation is to detect which are the contemporary failed metaphors, the *magic bullets* of the twenty-first century. "Are Filter Bubbles Real?", asks Bruns (2019). One thing is certain, though: media landscapes may change quickly, may change deeply, but communication will always remain a cornerstone of political participation as it is imbricated in political deliberation.

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CHAPTER 49

COMPARING MASS POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

PIPPA NORRIS

Research on political activism compares the ways that citizens engage in the public sphere, the processes that lead them to do so, and the consequences of these acts. The structure of opportunities for citizen activism in democratic or autocratic regime diverge sharply, such as in freedom of expression, association, and assembly. These contextual differences can be expected to have major consequences for the risks and rewards of becoming politically engaged—and the incentives driving this process.

To explore these issues, the first section describes the theoretical framework and builds upon previous research. The second section entitled "New Evidence" describes the data, concepts, and measures used in this study. Survey data is derived from the seventh wave of the World Values Survey/European Values Survey (WVS/EVS), with fieldwork conducted from 2017 to 2020, covering 75 diverse countries. Participation is measured by 18 survey items which are collapsed into standardized composite indices for voting turnout, civic activism, online activism, and protest activism, as described in the chapter's technical appendix. Nation-states are clustered into four types of regimes—liberal democracies, electoral democracies, electoral autocracies, and absolute autocracies, based on the Varieties of Democracy classification. Models focus on the links connecting motivational attitudes with likelihood of voting after controlling for several demographic characteristics and resources most commonly associated with turnout. The third section presents the empirical evidence. Overall reported levels of mass participation are confirmed to be significantly lower in autocracies, as expected, especially protest activism in more repressive states. But contrasts in the motivational attitudes associated with voting participation provide more mixed results. Finally, the findings are summarized and their broader implications considered.

Theories of Mass Participation in Democratic and Authoritarian Regimes

As a useful heuristic framework, political participation can be understood as the product of three sets of factors: the *structure of opportunities* set by the macro-level context, including the type of regime, levels of development and constitutional arrangements, as well as the role of individual-level *resources* like education, networks, leisure time, and income, which facilitate activism; and also the impact of *motivational attitudes* which typically mobilize citizens (Smets and Van Ham 2013). The latter includes the pursuit of substantive political influence (where activists believe they can do things), the inducements of material incentives (where activists hope to gain concrete benefits), and the avoidance of coercion (where activists seek to avoid threats to their physical security).

An extensive research literature in comparative politics has traditionally sought to understand the consequences of the structure of opportunities set by the formal institutional arrangements, legal framework, and informal social norms for activism (Geys 2006). This approach is exemplified by studies of how far voter turnout in Western democracies is influenced by registration processes, compulsory voting laws, patterns of party competition, the frequency of contests, and restrictions on the franchise (Franklin 2004). Researchers compare how participation varies across states or countries, and also the longitudinal effects of institutional reforms and regime change.

The role of regimes falls into this approach by expanding the comparative framework beyond Western democracies to understand mass participation in authoritarian states. Much research since the early 1990s, during the third wave era of democratization (Huntington 1991), focused on the roles of ordinary citizens in pro-democracy movements seeking transitions from authoritarianism and the subsequent consolidation of electoral democracies (Bermeo 2003; Bratton and de Walle 1992; Bunch and Wolchik 2006, 2011; Tucker 2007; Thomson and Kuntz 2009; Chaisty and Whitefield 2013). As exemplified by the color revolutions and Arab Spring, many scholars sought to assess the consequences of dissident anti-regime actions, including through street protests, social media, and voting for opposition parties in diverse cases, such as in Mexico during the era of PRI-predominance (Magaloni 2006; Schedler 2006), China (Stromseth, Malesky and Gueorguiv 2017), and in Putin's Russia (Smyth 2020). The contemporary era has been identified by many observers as one of democratic backsliding and authoritarian resurgence in electoral democracies worldwide (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2019; Maerz et al. 2020; Repucci 2020). This raises new puzzles about pro-regime activism in authoritarian states, such as why millions of ordinary people attend government rallies, vote for repressive leaders, or belong to ruling parties.

This chapter builds upon rational choice theories of the calculus of voting, but expands the framework to explain activism more generally (Downs 1957). The formal structure of opportunities for mass participation in democratic and authoritarian states has the capacity to alter both the *risks* and *rewards* associated with the calculus of political activism, influencing both the propensity of citizens to become engaged, as well as the motivation of these acts. The "risks" concern the costs of becoming involved in the public sphere, while the "rewards" reflect the benefits expected to accrue to the actor. In particular, compared with authoritarian regimes, liberal democracies reduce the risks of activism by citizens, while simultaneously maximizing the potential rewards for making political gains.

Risks and Rewards in Liberal Democracies

Following Dahl (1965), liberal democracies can be understood as regimes which respect fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, assembly, and association, without threats of criminal or civil penalties, providing citizens and groups with many opportunities to mobilize. This institutional context lowers the barriers by providing multiple channels for activists seeking to gain political influence. Verba and Nie (1972:2) originally defined political participation fairly narrowly, as acts by private citizens aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the actions they take. During the mid-twentieth century, activism in liberal democracies typically occurred through traditional channels of civic engagement linking citizens and the state, including voting, contacting officials, working in campaigns, and donating to parties, belonging to interest groups, social movements, and voluntary associations, as well as joining peaceful demonstrations, political strikes, and even violent protests seeking to influence decision makers (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Dalton 2019). In recent decades, however, democratic opportunities for political participation have diversified in terms of "*who*" (the agencies or collective organizations), "*what*" (the repertoires of actions commonly used for political expression), and "*where*" (the targets that participants seek to influence) (Norris 2002). Since the late twentieth century, a broader range of innovative channels of participatory and deliberative democracy have flowered around the world, involving citizens more directly in the political decisions which affect their lives and their communities, such as through involvement in online networks and digital social media like Twitter, community direct action groups, petitions, social audits, deliberative forums, consumer boycotts, participatory budgets, civil disobedience campaigns, public consultation exercises, town-hall meetings, and citizens' assemblies (Marsh 1977; Barnes and Kaase 1979; Kent Jennings and van Deth 1989; Smith 2009; Della Porta 2013; Van Deth 2014; Theocharis and van Deth 2016, 2017; Menser 2018).

At the same time, by being responsive and accountable to the concerns of ordinary citizens, the governing authorities in liberal democratic regimes are expected to reward activists with substantive political gains. The seminal framework seeking to explain the reasons for activism in liberal democracies, originally developed by Almond and Verba (1963), theorizes that individuals decide to become engaged in politics due to the *resources* which facilitate participation (like civic skills, media access, networks, time, and money) and the psychological orientations which *motivate* people to engage in public affairs (like political awareness, interest, and trust). In particular, Almond and Verba argued, in civic cultures, ordinary people are well informed about public affairs, have feelings of civic responsibility, and share a sense of political efficacy. Citizens are thought to engage in politics in liberal democracies because they believe that governing authorities are responsive to their concerns and that their actions will thereby have a substantive impact on politics, such as by influencing the election of representatives, decisions by governing authorities, issues on the public policy agenda, and further group interests.

Risks and Rewards in Autocracies

But citizens are also clearly politically active under many authoritarian regimes, as exemplified by pro-government rallies organized by the state in Iran and Cote d'Ivoire to counter unrest, plebiscitary elections in one-party predominant states like Singapore, Algeria, and Belarus, and anti-Trump protests mobilized in the Middle East. The Global Protest Tracker, for example, estimates that since 2017, 78 percent of authoritarian regimes have faced significant protests.[1] Even without the penalties of compulsory voting laws, recent parliamentary elections in several electoral autocracies where the outcome was largely preordained, such as Rwanda, Singapore, and Laos, generated reported rates of voter turnout over 80 percent, similar to levels of participation recoded in several long-established liberal democracies, like Denmark, the Netherlands, and New Zealand (Martinez I Coma and Morgenbesser 2020).[2]

So why do ordinary people become politically active in authoritarian states, where the calculus of the risk–reward ratio appears less promising?

In this context, risks of activism rise, because repressive autocracies severely curtail human rights and civil liberties, such as opposition rallies, pro-democracy protests, and online mobilization for human rights (Brancati 2016). Examples include civic disobedience campaigns roiling Belarus, Algeria, Hong Kong, and Russia.[3]

Moreover, under these regimes, rewards from activism diminish, as citizens have limited capacity to exert substantive influence on governance and the policy-making process. Limits on accountability weaken the potential influence of conventional forms of public participation on the authorities, including voting in contests with largely preordained outcomes (Hermet et al. 1978).

As a result, pro-regime forms of citizen participation may be primarily symbolic in meaning, serving as a ritualistic performance, rather than reflecting authentic and meaningful expressions of public preferences and choices (Dalton and Welzel 2014).

This raises the puzzle of why citizens are motivated to participate at all in this context. One potential explanation is that activism may reflect similar factors in democracies and autocracies, such as the role of political interest, education, media use, and evaluations of the government's performance and policies, for example satisfaction with Putin's record in expanding the Russian economy, or the Chinese Communist Party's success in lifting millions out of poverty (Frye et al. 2016). The role of the media has long been emphasized as particularly important, with state control of the airwaves mobilizing popular support for authoritarian leaders (Geddes and Zaller 1989).

Other potential explanations for activism in autocratic regimes may lie in particular techniques which the authorities use to gain support, namely the co-option of rival elites and grassroots supporters through the distribution of *material incentive*s associated with clientelism and corrupt practices (like vote-buying through accepting minor gifts, money, jobs, land, or favors in exchange for support) and/or the threats or use of *coercion* (including the use of violence).

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[1] See the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. *Global Protest Tracker.* https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker.

[2] International IDEA. Voting Turnout Database. https://www.idea.int/data-tools/data/voter-turnout.

[3] See the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. *Global Protest Tracker.* https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker.

Clientelism and Corrupt Practices

Authoritarian rulers commonly use corrupt practices to reward their supporters and co-opt potential critics. This includes offering material incentives through vote-buying, the distribution of subsidies and state benefits, and the deployment of patronage spoils like licenses, official permits, and jobs (Della Porta and Vannucci 1999; Schaffer 2007; Rose-Ackerman and Palifka 2016).

Major political corruption scandals involving financial malfeasance among elites continue to damage electoral integrity and democratic governance in numerous countries—such as the "Recruit" scandal in Japan, the misuse of "Westminster expenses" in Britain, and "Watergate" in the United States—as well as in many Southern European countries, such as in Greece, Italy, France, Spain, and Bulgaria (Heywood, Pujas, and Rhodes 2002; Della Porta and Vannucci 1999).

Problems of voter-buying, political graft, kickbacks, and cronyism often plague public affairs in many emerging economies (Norris and Abel van Es 2016).[4] In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the promise of giving supporters land rights is used to reward supporters and punish opponents, such as in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and Zimbabwe, (Smith 2009; Bratton 2008, 2013). In Zimbabwe, local voting results have been scrutinized by the government and the results used to penalize villages which did not support ZANU-PF. In Latin America, such as in Argentina, Mexico, and Brazil, it is common for parties to reward loyalists with public-sector jobs (Calvo and Maria Victoria Murillo 2013; Hilgersa 2008; Brusco, Nazareno, and Stokes 2004; Stokes et al. 2013). In Asia, the Middle East, and Central Europe, small bribes and gifts of food or clothing are often offered to get voters to the polls (Schaffer 2007; Corstange 2018).

Clientelism can be defined as giving (or withholding) material goods in return for political support, where the criterion of distribution used by the patron is simply whether the recipient will support them (Stokes 2011). Goods and services ranging from gifts of cash, food, access to health clinics or schools, or the award of government jobs and contracts are typically dispersed through this process by party machines and intermediary brokers (Holland and Palmer-Rubin 2015). Citizens participate in exchange for specific material benefits, such as money, gifts, jobs, land, or favors. Most simply, this may be payment-for-votes, or it may involve attendance at party rallies or other types of pro-regime actions (Holland and Palmer-Rubin 2015; Mares and Young 2016).

Coercion

Repressive autocratic states also use techniques of coercion to control mass participation, especially in societies with deep-rooted conflict. During the post-Cold War era, as the use of elections for local and national legislative office gradually spread worldwide in all but a handful of states, concern has risen about the proliferation of election-related violence and the number of contests held in a pervasive climate of fraud, mistrust, and intolerance that have ignited massive protests and conflict (Snyder 2000; Paris 2004; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Norris 2015). Contentious elections raise major challenges, with different degrees of severity, about the legitimacy of electoral actors, procedures, or outcomes (Norris, Frank and Martínez i Coma 2012). These problems can undermine democratic transitions in countries emerging from dictatorship, cause further instability and social tensions in fragile states, and thereby jeopardize stability, growth, and development in low-income economies (Collier 2009).

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[4] Transparency International. 2020. "Corruption Perceptions Index, 2020." https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl.

Authoritarian states limit formal political rights and civil liberties, repressing freedom of expression by independent media and online networks, restricting rights to association by opposition parties, and limiting opportunities for political mobilization through representative channels and campaigns of civil disobedience by dissident critics, pro-democracy movements, and opposing factions. Monitoring agencies such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International document countless violations of basic political rights and civil liberties by governments in authoritarian regimes around the world, including through severely restricting opportunities for dissent, silencing opposition parties, and restricting pro-democracy movements.

States deploy techniques of outright coercion with varying degrees of severity, like the use of aggressive tactics by security forces to break up opposition protests; extrajudicial executions of dissidents; the kidnap, disappearance, and murder of independent journalists and censorship or closure of media outlets; the imprisonment, torture, assassination, or exile of leading critics; and even, in the most extreme cases, the use of the military in acts of mass genocide against their own people (Davenport 2007). These practices are exemplified in Myanmar by the most recent military coups d'état, arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi, and internet shutdown, as well as Russian crackdowns against thousands protesting against the attempted assassination and arrest of the opposition leader, Alexei Navalny, and the punishment of peaceful protestors demonstrating for human rights in Iran and Hong Kong (Human Rights Watch 2021). The use of overt coercion by governments may heighten conflict with opposition movements at home, as well as potentially attracting sanctions by the international community, thereby undermining support for authoritarian regimes (Gerschewski 2018). Major human rights violations have the potential to trigger international penalties against states, such as diplomatic pressures, economic sanctions, bilateral embargoes on arms sales, exclusion from membership of multinational organizations, the loss of development aid, and even external military intervention.

Levels of Participation

These arguments suggest several testable propositions about how the propensity for activism, and the motivations, can be expected to differ under democratic and autocratic regimes.

At the most basic level, given the calculus of higher potential rewards and lower risks in liberal democracies, public participation in all forms of activism can be expected to be generally higher than in authoritarian states. In democratic societies, ordinary citizens face few formal legal or procedural barriers limiting their ability to cast ballots in free and fair contest, or to join voluntary associations and political parties, or to engage in contacting representatives, donating to causes, mobilizing online through social media, or organizing street demonstrations to support particular causes and issues. And governing authorities are more likely to respond to public concerns, due to electoral accountability. The first hypothesis therefore suggests that *levels of activism will usually generally be higher in democratic than authoritarian states.*

Types of Participation

Moreover, democratic and autocratic regimes may also vary in what types of political participation are most common. The risks of participation in autocracies are greatest in forms of public activism directed against the authorities, notably protests and demonstrations., where authoritarian states use repressive tactics against pro-democracy movements and opposition parties. By contrast, citizens face weaker risks in forms of activism like election turnout, if there is a secret ballot; in civic activism, like encouraging others how to vote; or in online activism, like searching for political information. The second proposition is therefore that *differences in levels of participation between authoritarian and democratic regimes will be lower in voting and civic engagement than in protest activism.*

Motivational Attitudes

Finally, the rewards driving engagement may plausibly differ by type of regime. In particular, compared with democracies, *incentives for citizens to participate in authoritarian states are expected to be more strongly motivated by avoidance of the risks of coercion, and by the material inducements of clientelism, patronage, and corrupt acts.* These propositions can be tested by examining how far the likelihood of voting is associated with perceptions of vote-buying and threats of violence at the polls.

New Evidence

Overall, therefore, the contrasts between authoritarian and democratic states suggest that levels, types of participation, and the motivational attitudes associated with activism, may all be expected to differ across regimes. Are these relationships observed in the empirical evidence?

There are several methodological challenges to addressing this question. Reliable survey data monitoring political behavior in many authoritarian states, such as the Soviet Union, was limited prior to political liberalization in the early 1990s, the global expansion of market research, and the development of major cross-national survey research programs like the International Social Science Program, the European Values Survey and World Values Survey, and the Global-barometers (Heath et al. 2005; Norris 2007). In addition government officials in several autocracies like Saudi Arabia continue to restrict surveys from asking questions about issues which they consider to be politically sensitive (like public support for the regime) or socially sensitive (such as the strength of religiosity or attitudes towards sexuality).

Moreover, even where surveys face no legal censorship, issues remain about the quality and reliability of data gathered in authoritarian states due to potential response bias which challenges the capacity of survey research to measure authentic political attitudes and reported behavior (Jowell et al. 2007). There are also serious questions about potential response bias which can be exacerbated when monitoring political attitudes and behaviors in societies governed by repressive regimes like China which limit freedom of expression (Robinson and Tannenberg 2019). The risks of false answers and self-censorship are particularly high where people fear that any responses seen as critical of the regime may be made known to the authorities, preventing the expression of authentic beliefs and reported behaviors. Yet this is a challenge to many types of direct survey questions about socially sensitive issues commonly found in any society, for example post-election surveys in America regularly overestimate voter turnout by 10 points or more (deBell et al. 2018).

Evidence for this chapter is derived from the seventh wave of the World Values Survey/European Values Survey (WVS/EVS). Fieldwork was conducted from 2017 to 2020, covering 75 countries in total, with the qualification that not all the selected items were carried in the EVS. The questionnaire monitors conventional civic participation, such as the frequency of political discussion, reported voting in national elections, contacting officials, and donating to a campaign, membership of a wide range of voluntary organizations in civil society (including political parties), as well as behaviors which Barnes and Kaase (1979) conceptualized as “alternative” channels of protest activism, including signing a petition, joining boycotts, attending peaceful demonstrations, and joining strikes. The bright dividing line between civic and protest activism has dissolved somewhat in subsequent decades, but the distinction remains useful analytically. In addition, most research has traditionally focused on comparing in-person face-to-face forms of activism, but the most recent wave of the WVS includes several innovative items monitoring parallel types of online participation. Table 49.4 describes the measures and composite standardized scales of political participation.

The WVW/EVS survey facilitates the comparison of cultural attitudes, social background, and mass behavior in a variety of regimes. The level of liberal democracy is measured using the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) standardized 100-point index of liberal democracy. Regimes are categorized by the V-Dem four-fold classification of Regimes of the World, matched to the year of survey fieldwork. The seventh wave of the WVS/EVS survey facilitates comparison of 23 *liberal democracies* (such as New Zealand, Germany, Estonia, and Chile), 20 *electoral democracies* with competative contests but weak institutions (including Argentina, Poland, Brazil, and Mexico), 28 *electoral autocracies* with more limited freedoms (such as Armenia, Pakistan, Iraq, and Myanmar), and 4 *absolute autocracies* (notably Viet Nam and China as one-party states, and Thailand (military junta), and Jordan (monarchy)).

Types of Activism

As the first step, do levels of engagement and types of political participation vary by regime? Table 49.1 describes the contrasts observed in 18 diverse forms of activism monitored in the EVS/WVS survey, with the frequencies of activism broken by the types of regimes. This initial comparison confirms the way that, as expected, many types of

Table 49.1 Frequency of Activism by Type of Regime

	Absolute autocracy	Electoral autocracy	Electoral democracy	Liberal democracy	All
Always vote in national elections	39	52	69	67	61
Always vote in local elections	35	49	68	62	58
Have donated to a group/campaign	45	20	27	41	30
Have signed a petition	9	14	20	47	30
Have used the internet to search for political information	24	18	21	35	24
Have encouraged others how to vote	10	18	20	38	23
Have attended a peaceful demonstration	11	13	15	20	16
Have contacted a government official	12	12	14	21	15
Have often discussed politics with friends	16	14	15	14	15
Is a party member	12	17	16	13	15
Have used the internet to sign an electronic petition	4	7	7	23	11
Is an active party member	4	10	12	10	10
Have joined a boycott	6	6	7	11	9
Have encouraged others to take political action	4	7	7	13	8
Have used the internet to encourage others to take political action	3	6	6	13	8
Have joined a political strike	4	5	6	7	6
Have used the internet to organize political events	3	4	5	4	4
Have occupied a building	2	2	2	3	2

Note: See the appendix for details.
Source: The European Values Survey/World Values Survey, pooled 1-7 waves.

activism are usually more common in democracies—although not all. Thus, around two-thirds of respondents in democracies reported that they always voted in local and national elections, compared with around half of those living in electoral autocracies and only around one-third in the absolute autocracies which held these contests. The contrasts between liberal democracies and other types of regimes was even greater in more demanding acts such as encouraging others how to vote or to take political action, attending peaceful demonstrations, contacting government officials, joining a boycott, and using the internet to endorse an electronic petition. On some items, however, there were few differences by regime, notably engagement in political discussion with friends, and membership of political parties.

Table 49.2 uses the separate survey items to construct standardized 10-point composite scales of 4 common types of activism, including voting turnout, civic activism, online

Table 49.2 Activism Scales by Type of Regime

Type of Regime	Election turnout 10-pt scale	Civic activism 10-pt scale	Online activism 10-pt scale	Protest activism 10-pt scale
Absolute autocracies	6.7	2.4	1.8	1.6
Electoral autocracies	7.7	2.9	2.0	2.0
Electoral democracies	8.6	3.2	2.4	3.0
Liberal democracies	8.4	4.0	3.1	4.0
Total		3.1	2.3	2.9
Correlation with V-Dem's liberal democracy index	.169 ***	.342 *	.387 *	.725 **
N. nations	74	44	43	75

Notes: See the Technical Appendix for the questions and coding. The Liberal Democracy 100-point scale is from the Varieties of Democracy project (V-Dem V. 9.0). Sig. * .05 ** .01 *** .001
Source: Seventh wave of the European Values Survey/World Values Survey. (F/w 2017–20)

activism, and protest activism, to test the regime contrasts expected to be observed (see the appendix for details). The results demonstrate that variations in the frequency of participation were significantly correlated across all dimensions with the V-Dem index of liberal democracy. The strength of the correlation was greatest for protest activism (R.=.725***), as expected for the reasons as discussed earlier, while the correlation was weakest for levels of election turnout (R=.169***). Protest activism, potentially the most visible and public regime-challenging type of activity, raising the highest risks in repressive states, shows the largest activism gap between liberal democracies and autocracies.

For a more detailed look, the scattergrams in Figures 49.1–4 illustrate the distribution of different forms of activism across the countries in the survey on the vertical axis, compared with the level of liberal democracy on the horizontal axis. Figure 49.1 displays the reported voting turnout scale showing clear contrasts between relatively high levels of turnout for citizens living in long-established democratic societies with competitive party systems, respect for human rights, and high levels of electoral integrity, such as Denmark, Germany, and Norway, and authoritarian states with lower reported voting participation, such as in Vietnam, Egypt, Myanmar, and Ethiopia. At the same time, many outliers can be observed, for example reported voting turnout among liberal democracies, in countries like Lithuania, Slovakia, Chile, and even Switzerland, are very similar to states like Russia, Malaysia, and Azerbaijan. Many institutional and social factors lead to turnout variations among states, such as registration and voting laws, patterns of party competition, and levels of human development (Geys 2006; Martinez I Coma and Morgenbesser 2020).

Similar observations distinguish societies in levels of civic activism (Figure 49.2), measured by whether people donated to campaigns or groups, contacted government officials, or encouraged others to take political action or to vote. Here again several autocracies such as Ethiopia, Egypt, and Vietnam display very low levels of civic activism—while the highest activism can be observed in longstanding democracies such as Germany, Australia, and New

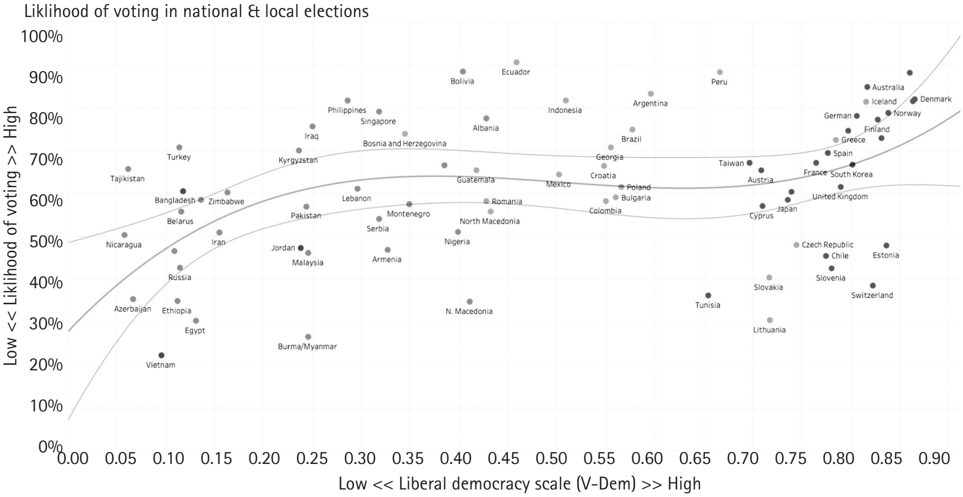

FIGURE 49.1 Voting Turnout

Note: Q: *"When elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never? A) Local level B) National level"*

Source: EVS/WVS Wave 7 2017–2020.

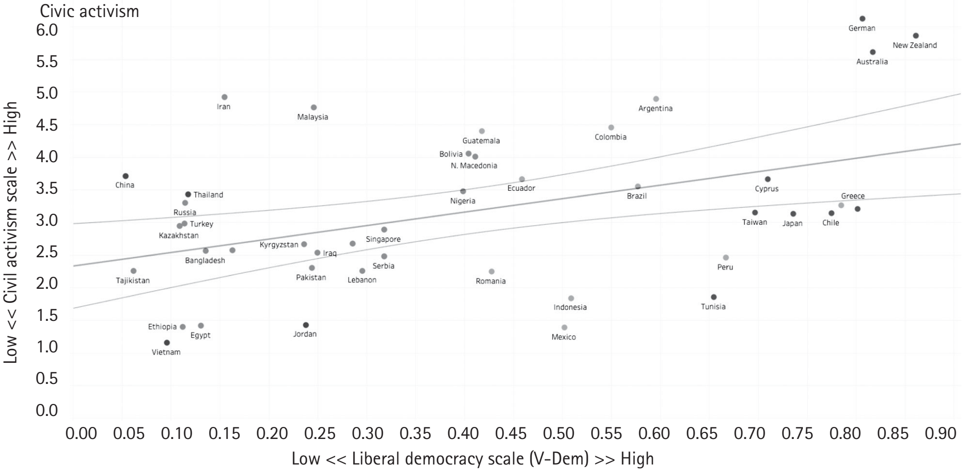

FIGURE 49.2 Civic Activism

Note: Q: *"Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it. A) Donate to a group or campaign; B) Contact a governmental official; C) Encourage others to take political action; D) Encourage others to vote."*

Source: EVS/WVS Wave 7 2017–2020.

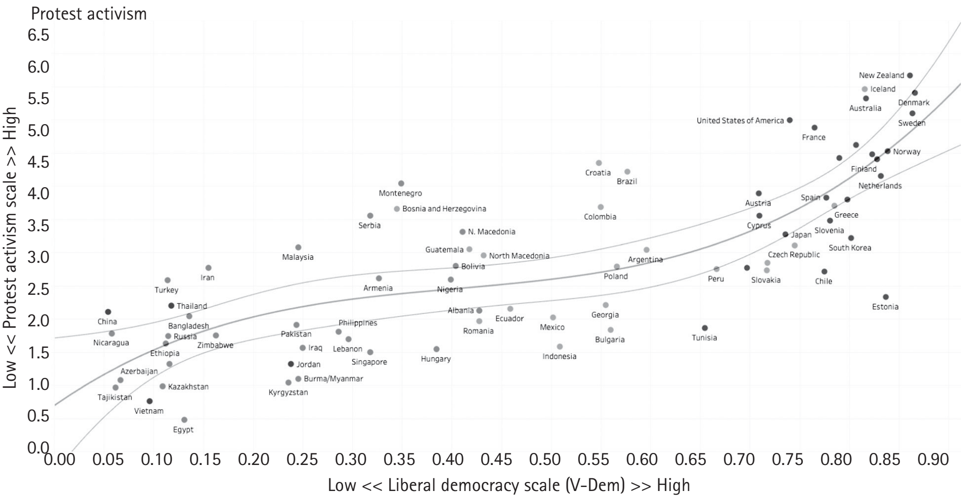

FIGURE 49.3 Protest Activism

Note: Q: *"Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it. A) Sign a petition; B) Join in boycotts; C) Attend peaceful demonstrations; D) Join strikes."*

Source: EVS/WVS Wave 7 2017–2020.

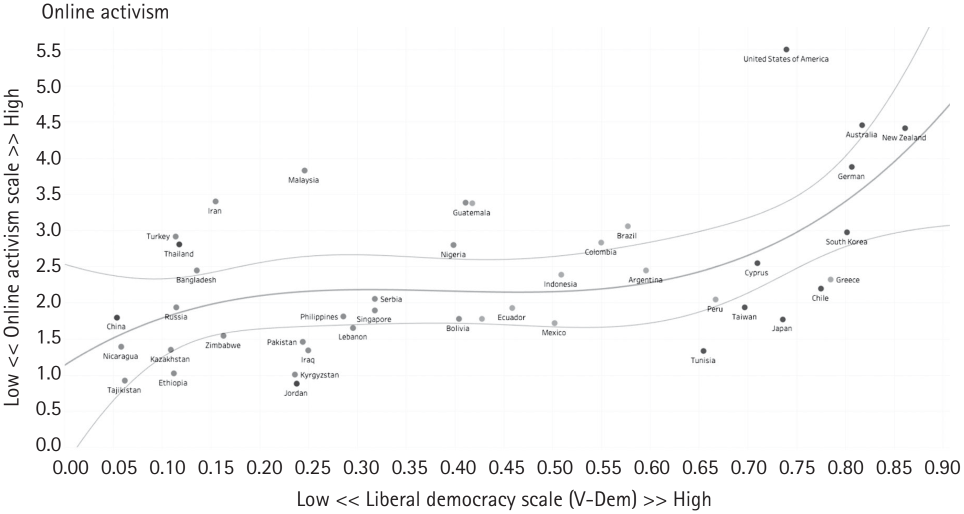

FIGURE 49.4 Online Activism

Note: Q: *"Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some other forms of political action that people can take using internet and social media tools like Facebook, Twitter etc., and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it, or would never under any circumstances do it. A) Search for information about politics; B) Sign an electronic petition; C) Encourage others to take political action; D) Organize political activities, events, protests."*

Source: EVS/WVS Wave 7 2017–2020.

Zealand. At the same time, substantial variations can be observed at all levels of democracy, such as between Malaysia and Jordan, or Argentina and Mexico.

Some of the clearest differences associated with the type of regime and level of democratization concerns protest activism, illustrated in Figure 49.3, measured by whether people report signing a petition, joining in boycotts, attending peaceful demonstrations, or joining strikes. Here long-established liberal democracies such as Iceland, New Zealand, Australia, France, and the USA have some of the greatest protest activism. By contrast, repressive states, such as Egypt, Vietnam, and Tajikistan, have some of the lowest.

Finally, there is a lot of debate about the impact of online activism, including whether social media functions as a potential way for anti-regime movements and pro-democracy dissidents to share information and mobilize, bypassing channels of communications like television and radio which can be more easily controlled by authoritarian states. Figure 49.4 shows that online activism is most common in advanced industrialized societies, with high levels of access to technology, and long-established democracies like the US, Germany, Australia, and New Zealand. It is least commonly used in poorer developing societies, where access to the internet is more limited, and in authoritarian states like China, Nicaragua, and Tajikistan.

Motivations

But what about the motivations which bring citizens into politics, do these differ by regime type? Here we can focus on analyzing how far several individual-level factors are associated with likelihood to vote in national and local elections. The survey data allows us to compare perceptions of the how far voters are bribed in each country's elections and how far voters face threats of violence at the polls in societies classified into autocracies and democracies. One point about these measures is that it remains difficult to ask about direct experience of these socially-sensitive matters so the items are designed to ask about perceptions instead. In this regard, responses may reflect broader concerns about corruption and conflict, rather than whether the respondent was personally offered a bribe or felt threatened at the polls. Table 49.3 uses regression models which examine the relationship between these types of risks and rewards and the likelihood to vote scale, after controlling for the standard demographic characteristics of gender and age, and individual-level resources which typically facilitate voting participation, including education and use of the news media.

The results in Table 49.3 show that in autocracies, perceptions of the frequency of voter bribery and violence at the polls are both significant but negatively related to likelihood to vote. In this regard, perceptions of vote-buying may reflect broader concern about corruption, reducing public trust in the electoral process. Perceptions of violence at the polls are also significantly linked with lower likelihood of voting in democracies as well, confirming that much previous research suggesting that contentious elections and threats or outbreaks of violence can dampen activism (Norris 2015). Incidents of violence at the polls are commonly reported in electoral democracies like Nigeria with deep-rooted ethnic divisions, where close elections can spark outbreaks of civil conflict (Bratton 2008; Collier 2009; Mares and Young 2016; Norris, Frank, and Martinez I Coma 2012). At the same time, in the democracies under comparison, perceptions of vote buying were not significantly associated with turnout.

In terms of the controls, the results show that, compared with women, men are significantly more likely to vote in autocracies, and the traditional gender gap has shrunk to

Table 49.3 Factors Explaining Likelihood of Voting

	Autocracies				Democracies			
	B	SE	Beta	Sig	B	SE	Beta	Sig
How often voters are bribed in the country's elections	–0.07	0.01	–0.03	***	0.01	0.01	0.01	N/s
How often voters are threatened with violence at the polls	–0.07	0.01	–0.03	***	-0.09	0.01	-0.04	***
Gender (male)	0.16	0.03	0.03	***	–0.02	0.02	–0.01	N/s
Age in years	0.04	0.00	0.23	***	0.03	0.00	0.24	***
Education	–0.20	0.02	–0.05	***	0.09	0.02	0.03	***
Use of news media	–0.07	0.00	–0.12	***	–0.03	0.00	–0.05	***
Adjusted R^2	0.07				0.06			
N.	30,696				47,693			
(Constant)	7.54	0.09			7.60	0.06		

Note: Dependent Variable: Likelihood of voting in national and local elections turnout 10-pt scale
Sig. * .05 ** .01 *** .001
Source: The European Values Survey/World Values Survey, pooled 6-7 waves.

insignificance in democracies. By contrast, age is consistently important, indeed the strongest association with likelihood to vote in the model, as numerous previous studies have reported (cf. Franklin 2004), with voting increasing significantly among older sectors of the population. The role of education proves inconsistent across regime types. Thus, in democracies, education is positive associated with the propensity to vote, by lowering the barriers to awareness about public affairs and providing civic skills and knowledge, which facilitates engagement (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001). But education is negatively related to turnout in autocracies, for reasons which remain to be established, although this may be due to groups mobilized by the regime. Finally, greater use of the news media is observed to be linked in the models with *less* frequent propensity to vote in both autocracies and democracies, again for reasons which require further exploration.

Conclusions

The chapter theorized that the decision to become active across multiple dimensions is driven by rational calculations of potential risks and rewards. In liberal democracies respecting political rights and civil liberties, where freedom of expression and association is protected, participation is usually associated with few major risks, and activists have

Table 49.4 Variables

Variable	Measurement	Coding
Regime typology	Regimes of the world classified by the Varieties of Democracy project (V-Dem) matched to the year of the WVS survey in each country.	0 Absolute autocracy 1 Electoral autocracy 2 Electoral democracy 3 Liberal democracy
Liberal democracy	Liberal democracy index (V-Dem)	1-100 scale
Civic activism	Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it. A) Donate to a group or campaign; B) Contact a governmental official; C) Encourage others to take political action; D) Encourage others to vote.	1 Would never do 2 Might do 3 Have done
Protest activism	Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it. A) Sign a petition; B) Join in boycotts; C) Attend peaceful demonstrations; D) Join strikes.	1 Would never do 2. Might do 3 Have done
Online activism	Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some other forms of political action that people can take using internet and social media tools like Facebook, Twitter etc., and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it, or would never under any circumstances do it. A) Search for information about politics; B) Sign an electronic petition; C) Encourage others to take political action; D) Organize political activities, events, protests.	1 Would never do 2. Might do 3 Have done
Voting turnout	When elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never? A) Local level B) National level	1 Not allowed to vote 2 Never 3 Usually 4 Always
Vote bribe	How often are voters bribed in your country's elections?	1 Not at all often 2. Not often 3 Fairly often 4 Very often
Vote violence	How often are voters threatened with violence at the polls?	1 Not at all often 2. Not often 3 Fairly often 4 Very often

multiple opportunities to influence the political process through many channels, including the election of representatives and political parties, peaceful protests demanding action, social media sharing information and mobilizing events among social networks, supporting candidates through local rallies, fundraising and canvassing, or engaging in direct actions with networks of colleagues and neighbors to solve local community problems. Moreover, activism also promises civic rewards, if the process of participation generates political influence, such as over the selection of parties and leaders, the salience of problems on the issue agenda, processes of governance, and/or decisions by political elites.

By contrast, the risk–reward calculus is expected to differ sharply in authoritarian regimes, which heighten the serious dangers of anti-government activism, while limiting the benefits of potentially exerting influence over the political process. In this regard, participation is expected to be generally lower than in democracies, especially for public elite-challenging activities such as street protests and mass demonstrations, and alternative considerations may generate incentives for mass activism, including the inducements of corrupt practices and the threat of violence.

The empirical evidence in this chapter confirms the propositions that levels of participation generally tend to be lower in authoritarian than in democratic states, with the disparities weaker in electoral turnout, moderate in civic and online activism, and strongest in protest activism. At the same time the scatter plots show considerable variations across countries within each regime type, suggesting that many other institutional and societal characteristics need to be taken into account for comprehensive explanations. Moreover, the impact of perceptions of bribery and violence at the polls on likelihood to vote provide only inconsistent evidence that these characteristics distinguish participation in democracies and autocracies. In particular, threats of violence at the polls depress the propensity to vote across countries with both types of regimes.

The broader lessons from the chapter are that traditionally most systematic research on political participation has focused on comparing liberal democracies, including in many post-industrial societies in North America and Europe. In recent decades, a growing research literature based on case-studies and survey research has expanded the study to understand public participation in the process of authoritarian break down and subsequent democratic transitions, such as in the color revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe and the Arab Spring, especially the role of anti-regime protests and civil disobedience campaigns in these developments. Yet processes of democratic backsliding and authoritarian resurgence have been widely observed in recent years. This suggest that the research agenda needs to be further enlarged to understand the role of ordinary citizens in supporting the democratization process, as well as deepening our understanding of the complex reasons why people engage in politics in authoritarian regimes.

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CHAPTER 50

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

DONATELLA DELLA PORTA AND MARTÍN PORTOS

Globalization is a complex, multi-faceted process and it is difficult to gather consensus over a single definition. Economic globalization favors one integrated world market in which "buyers and sellers are in such free intercourse with one another that the prices of the same goods tend to equality easily and quickly" (Cooper 1986: 71). Going beyond economic terms, and generalizing this trend to broader societal relations, globalization refers not only to the movement toward an integrated global society but also the decreasing significance of national borders and undermining of nation-states' central power (Zürn 2013). Indeed, according to Held et al. (1999), globalization is related to the spatial broadening and the intensification of global and regional economic, cultural, and political interconnectedness. Lower effectiveness of unilateral policies and state authority, procedures for international negotiation and agreements and, especially, assignment and restructuration of powers and global governance, have often led to contestation on the side of progressive agents. Social movement organizations such as Attac, the Global Justice Movement (GJM), and other actors in the transnational sphere have called neoliberal globalization responsible for changing material conditions, labor market dynamics, and increasing inequalities within and across nations. Yet, while the issue is widely debated, the way globalization shapes and affects social movements and broader political participation is convoluted (Andretta et al. 2018).

Although it took a while to develop in political participation and social movement studies, research on the transnational dimension has flourished with the study of the GJM (Amelung and Baumgarten 2017; della Porta et al. 2006; della Porta and Tarrow 2005; Tarrow 2005). Acquiring global visibility with the protests against the third summit of the World Trade Organization in Seattle in 1999, it spread through counter-summits and social forums that proved to be important venues in which activists from all over the world met to build a shared criticism of corporate globalization and propose alternatives to it (della Porta 2007). Social movement studies explained the emerging transnational social movement organizations, global protests, and cosmopolitan framing as triggered by economic, social, political, and cultural globalization. While social movement ideas had often spread cross-nationally, the need to act globally increased with the shifts of competencies towards international organizations and multinational corporations. Upward scale shift from the national to the transnational level of contention seemed to be an unstoppable trend.

The GJM has been interpreted as a sign of globalization of contentious politics. As decisions moved at the international level, social movements and civil society actors seemed to adapt, targeting international organizations. This was all the more the case in Europe, where the European Union had acquired more and more competencies, opening various channels of access to civil society organizations. In the beginning of the new millennium, the European Social Forums offered an important public space for the convergence of various streams of progressive movements all over the continent and beyond. Acting globally, various transnational campaigns were seen to reflect but also fuel the spread of cosmopolitan values.

In fact, the GJM pushed social movement studies to analyze the transnational dimension of contentious politics. Transnational counter-summits and social forums, as venues for protests and proposals against neoliberal globalization, were empirically investigated in order to understand the organizational forms, action repertoires, and collective framing at transnational level. Political opportunities—a central explanatory concept in social movement studies—started to be considered as multilevel. Transnationalization of social movements appeared as a trend, driven by globalization but also by cosmopolitan culture. Economic globalization represented a main target of the protest that, however, contributed to political globalization, by forming transnational political actors and calling for different global policies. Democratization of global politics was an important aim in attempts to reform international organizations, going from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to the United Nation and the EU. Plural and cosmopolitan identities grew through transnational collective action. The GJM acted as a transnational public sphere in order to make powerful and secretive international organizations accountable to world citizens for their deeds and misdeeds.

Transnationalization was indeed visible on the main dimension of social movements (della Porta 2007, 2009a, 2009b). Mobilizations were more and more often organized transnationally, challenging the idea that the nation-state is the natural arena for contentious politics. Protests moved to the places in which international organizations held their summits—especially those of the international financial organizations, such as the WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF, which had played a major role in spreading neoliberal doctrine; but also to the most powerful macro-regional organization, the EU, which was also criticized as betraying its public mission of creating better conditions for citizens, instead defending the powerful (della Porta 2009b). Counter-summits involved a complex protest repertoire, with non-violent direct action in the street, but also forums devoted to the development of an alternative vision of world politics. Growing in number, transnational protests were particularly influential, given their capacity to network activists from different countries, during long-lasting preparations and emotionally intense performances. The social forums helped build a different knowledge from below, fueling the development of cosmopolitan identities.

Through the organization of transnational action, transnational networks also grew in members and in numbers. They also broadened their forms adding to the formal associations, characterized by a small core of activists and reliance on the discrete forms of transnational diplomacy, the horizontal networks, part local and part global, growing within global protest campaigns. While social forums were active also at the local and national levels, the global dimension remained the most important one. Activists presented their actions as part of a global movement calling for global justice and global democracy, bridging the local and the global (della Porta and Tarrow 2005) and so contributing to the development of a transnational political system and of cosmopolitan identities (Tarrow 2005; della Porta and Caiani 2009).

A few years later, the Great Recession seemed to have, if not inverted, at least stopped what seemed a trend towards the transnationalization of social movements. Especially,

> while both waves of protest speak a cosmopolitan language, claiming global rights and blaming global financial capital, the GJM moved to the national (and the local) from the transnational, while the new wave took the reverse root and focused on the national level of protest … Probably the most visible disjuncture between the two waves of protest, therefore, is indeed related to their territorial level: while the GJM often engaged in cross-border mobilizations that moved from one country to another, the current wave of protest chose relatively stable camps, deeply inserted in the urban settings of hundreds of cities across the world, as the main venue of activists.
>
> (della Porta and Mattoni 2014)

While the GJM was also rooted in national politics and social movement cultures (Sommier and Fillieule 2013; della Porta et al. 2006), with anti-austerity protests the national level became all the more relevant (della Porta 2013). National pride was often shown through the use of national flags and anthems within calls for defense of national sovereignty against the dominance of powerful states, international organizations, and big corporations. Protestors stigmatized the abduction of national democracy by financial powers and international organizations, above all the IMF and the EU. Given the varying timing and intensity of the financial crisis, mobilizations were particularly sensitive to national political opportunities (or the lack thereof). Surveys carried out during protest events in various European countries signaled the increasing importance given to the national level of government as target of the protest claims (della Porta 2013).

Nevertheless, also anti-austerity protests (and those which followed them), kept a focus on globalization. In this chapter we argue that addressing the topic of globalization within research on political participation requires not only distinguishing different forms of globalization, but also looking at the different actors mobilizing on them. In particular, while on the Right of the political spectrum globalization was stigmatized through appeals to exclusive nationalist identities, on the Left cosmopolitan visions still prevailed, combined with a condemnation of rampant social inequalities and the fight for social justice and democracy. Indeed, cross-national diffusion of ideas and international solidarity remained central for mobilizations on social rights, violence on women, or climate change, even if transnationalization happened in different ways throughout history and the organization of global campaigns became more difficult, given declining organizational resources.

ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION, SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AND THE LEFT

First and foremost, the economic consequences of globalization as market liberalization have been targeted on the Left in a number of waves of contention that have addressed successive crises within neoliberal capitalism (della Porta 2015). As Hanspeter Kriesi and collaborators have forcefully argued (2008), a wave of political change swept across West European democracies through the 1970s and 1980s. An educational revolution led to a splitting of the middle class into two antagonist groups, business managers closely aligned with the bureaucratic hierarchy, and cultural professionals, more in face-to-face services (Kriesi 1989; see Oesch 2006). This division within the middle classes lies behind one of the most important social and political transformations in the second half of the twentieth century: new social movements emerged in the post-industrial economy, emphasizing post-materialistic values (ecology, peace, LGTB, and women's rights), promoting social mobilization through cultural innovations, transforming identities and developing new lifestyles (see Inglehart 1977; Kriesi et al. 1995). These movements were to introduce—even if with varying degrees of success—some of their demands in the political arena, and they would crystallize in several Green and New Left parties across European democracies, but also importantly, they would contribute to a predominance of left-wing protests and protesters.

With the rise of new social movements in the 1970s, the labor movement was considered as in decline. New conflicts around immaterial forms of property eclipsed industrial society and its main conflicts around material productions (Touraine 1985; Melucci 1996; Andretta et al. 2018). Given the so-called compromise between labor and capital in the Trente Glorieuses, the class cleavage was assumed to be pacified (della Porta and Portos 2020). However, the rapid decline of Fordism led to a re-emergence of conflicts on economic issues in the 1980s, addressing skyrocketing social inequalities and the retrenchment of the welfare state (Hutter 2014). Indeed, the development of neoliberal capitalism was met with labor contestation in a situation of heavy attacks on workers' rights, outside and inside the working place, which was linked to the decline of manufacturing blue-collar jobs as well as declining political allegiances.

Albeit in different ways, social movement actors have networked at the transnational level. Such networks have allowed the bridging of concerns from "old" and "new" movements within broad and heterogeneous alliances, with anti-neoliberalism working as a master frame (della Porta et al. 2006; Andretta et al. 2018). Specifically, transnational forces and actors organized at the beginning of the millennium to contend with neoliberal globalization dynamics, such as the GJM (della Porta 2007, 2009b; della Porta and Tarrow 2005; della Porta et al. 2006). While the scope of transnational protests tended to be short lived and more restricted, there has been an increasing trend towards addressing transnational targets in the staging of protest events (Hutter and Kriesi 2013: 284–5). Against this backdrop, the Great Recession saw a revival of collective mobilizations on restricted social rights that took massive forms especially in the European countries that were most hit by the socioeconomic downturn, and especially where inequalities were higher and rapidly increasing (see Giugni and Grasso 2015).

The GJM denounced increasing inequalities both across and within states in a phase of rampant neoliberalism; a decade later anti-austerity and Occupy protesters mobilized massively against the financial crisis and ensuing recession that signaled the crisis, but not the dismissal, of neoliberalism (Crouch 2011; della Porta and Portos 2020). Notwithstanding the differences between these movements, in both cases, labor movements' main organizations and issues (such as the criticism of social inequalities) acquired new visibility, being bridged with claims for the protection of diversities that were typical of new social movements. While in the GJM, encounters between "old" and "new" movements started first of all at the transnational level and then scaled down at the national and local levels, in anti-austerity protests, following the different scale and timing of the crisis, they developed more at the national level. Also, the GJM had denounced the increasing social injustice brought about by neoliberalism, but still hoped for some openings that allowed to reform the system (della Porta 2007, 2009a); in contrast, the anti-austerity protests developed in moments of crisis, with a worsening of economic conditions but also a closing down of political opportunities at the national level, as even centre-left governments capitulated to requests for deregulation, privatization and liberalization from international institutions and big corporations.

Intense and frequent waves of contentious politics in the new millennium challenged the view that, at least in Western Europe and North America, protest mobilizations have become increasingly conventional. In these "movement societies," protest is meant to be used more often than ever before, becoming an integral part of modern life and increasingly intertwined with institutional politics, representing a broader set of claims, and encompassing more heterogeneous constituencies (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). In line with this approach, and challenging the traditional asymmetry in protest participation (i.e., left-leaning citizens protest more), some empirical evidence has led some scholars to speak about the "normalisation of the protesters" (van Aelst and Walgrave 2001), which suggests a closing gap between left and right-wing milieus when it comes to protest engagement (Giugni and Grasso 2019). That is to say, right-wing individuals would progressively be turning out to be as likely as left-wing people to engage in protests. However, at odds with this expectation, most recent empirical evidence still stress the left-wing bias of protest activities and protesters (Hutter and Kriesi 2013; Torcal et al. 2015; Pirro and Portos 2021). Not only are there hardly any protest events in favor of economic liberalism, deregulation, or reducing welfare benefits, but pro-migrant contentious activities by far and large outweigh protests against them (Hutter and Kriesi 2013). In contrast, protests related to job conditions, unemployment, inequality, and insufficient public spending and welfare retrenchment have intensified, and more so in light of the Great Recession and the implementation of austerity policies. Forms of direct action and civil disobedience have spread, together with demands for radical changes.

While issues related to economic globalization and European integration are the most salient issues in political negotiations beyond the national level— and protest events follow some of these highly visible events and negotiations (e.g., rallies and clashes unfolded in light of the 2017 G20 Leaders' Summit in Hamburg), overall transnational protests are still rare in absolute terms (Hutter and Kriesi 2013). Moreover, these scholars posit that globalization processes, and specifically the aforementioned divide in the middle class between traditional workers and social-cultural specialists (Kriesi 1989), would lead to a deep and far-reaching transformation of the cleavage structures. This will happen through the formation of a new integration–demarcation cleavage that opposes globalization's winners and losers, especially affecting the cultural dimension of the political space (Kriesi et al. 2008; Hutter 2014). While the latter tend to adopt authoritarian values, the former tend to embrace cosmopolitanism and a libertarian value orientation. This way, international economic integration seems to have produced domestic disintegration in several countries. In the global age, winners of globalization "tend to share libertarian and postmaterialist values, which predispose them for unconventional politics," and Swen Hutter and Hanspeter Kriesi point out that "rebels on the right tend to have authoritarian and materialist values and prefer (orderly) conventional political action over (disorderly) protest politics" (2013: 287). Not only sociocultural specialists are more engaged in protest activities than unskilled workers, but empirical evidence points towards an increasing homogenization on the structural basis of leftist movements, being sociocultural specialists with libertarian values the main protagonists of protests, thereby blurring the line between old and new movements (Eggert and Giugni 2012, 2015).

As a side effect, the emphasis on progressive values and cultural integration of left-wing parties makes them lose appeal among many of the economic losers of the globalization who favor institutional channels of expression. Accordingly, social movement scholars have tended to focus on left-libertarian movements and, notwithstanding a growing body of literature (Caiani et al. 2012; Castelli Gattinara and Pirro 2019), they have arguably devoted less attention to the populist radical right—that has been instead a topic of interest for students of electoral politics as some of these parties dramatically increased their mobilizing capacity in many West European countries through the 1990s (Arzheimer 2009).

Cultural Globalization, Migration, and the Right

While the Left has, by and large, criticized the globalization of the market, within cosmopolitan visions (della Porta 2020a), on the Right the specific aspects of globalization which have been mainly opposed have been exactly those related with the increasing movements of people and interactions between different cultures. In fact, not only in the radical Right, conservative values and exclusive narratives have developed against minorities, especially those related to gender, religions, and ethnicity. Racialized groups have been more and more under attack and so have been migrants and asylum seekers.

Globalization has been in fact certainly related to the growing relevance of contentious politics around migration. According to Ruud Koopmans and collaborators (2005: 3), "[P]olitical mobilization around issues of immigration and ethnic relations … constitute since the early 1990s the most prominent and controversial fields of political contention in West European polities." As globalization is associated with decreasing national steering capacity over economic and social policymaking, it leads to an increased salience of cultural-immigration over socioeconomic issues (see Hutter 2014). Globalization grievances and anxieties are more successfully mobilized by populist radical right forces in the electoral arena. In the words of Cas Mudde, "[P]opulist radical parties are the most ideologically pure and electorally successful opponents of globalization" (2007: 196).

Indeed, most recent empirical evidence suggests that globalization (in terms of trade, technological change/automation, and economic recession) is associated with anti-internationalism and the growth of extreme right-wing parties—and that the use of social welfare compensation does not seem able to dampen these political trends (Milner 2021). While some authors stressed the relevance of cultural and value change—to the detriment of economic correlates—in order to explain support for populist parties and leaders in the US and Europe (Norris and Inglehart 2019), variables measuring economic developments in light of globalization keep playing a prominent role. For instance, Thomas Kurer (2020) argues that, relative to survivors in routine jobs, routine workers who become unemployed support right-wing populist parties to a lower extent, which is interpreted as evidence for social status anxiety rather than economic insecurity. Importantly, Dani Rodrik (2021) singles out four channels through which globalization shocks, often working through culture and identity but also economic developments, can stimulate right-wing populism: a) a direct effect from economic dislocation to demands for anti-elite, redistributive policies; b) an indirect demand-side effect, through the amplification of identity and cultural divisions; c) a supply-side effect through political candidates embracing more populist platforms in response to economic shocks; d) and another supply-side effect through political candidates taking platforms that inflame cultural and identity tensions to shift voters' attention away from economic issues.

While forces such as the Sweden Democrats, the Flemish Vlaams Belang, the Italian (Northern) League, or the French Front National often address strong critiques towards representative democracies, these parties have shown a strong electoral mobilization capacity, often relying upon nativist, authoritarian, and populist attributes (Mudde 2007). Some authors have interpreted the success of radical right parties as the result of counter-mobilization against left-libertarian values, and especially cultural liberalism. Indeed, radical right parties tend to rely on law and order, strong national identity and pride, the defense of traditional moral standards and state enforcement principles (Ignazi 2003). Though, above all "the rise of the radical right in its various guises signals the opposition of parts of the receiving societies against what is perceived as too much immigration and a threat to the national cultural integrity" (Koopmans et al. 2005: 3). Research has found, for instance, that inflows of immigrants into communities significantly increase far right Freedom Party of Austria's (FPÖ's) electoral support (Halla et al. 2017); also, Greek islands impacted by the 2015 refugee crisis have increased vote share for the extreme right-wing Golden Dawn party (Dinas et al. 2019).

Yet, the success of far-right parties ultimately depends on their ability to mobilize a coalition of interests between voters with cultural grievances over immigration and, also crucially, people with economic grievances over immigration (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). Research has noted, however, the extreme right is not the only driving force behind the "anti-immigrant turn" of electoral politics in Western Europe, as even the mainstream left becomes increasingly critical towards immigration as its mainstream and/or extreme right competitors intensify their populist rhetoric (Alonso and Claro da Fonseca 2012).

While the radical right mobilizes in the electoral arena, "The demonstrations orchestrated by Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes (PEGIDA), the rise of anti-immigrant vigilante groups and citizen street patrols (e.g. the Soldiers of Odin), and the swift spread of the Identitarian movement," demonstrate that "extra-parliamentary grassroots activism is part of the alliance and conflict structure of nativist collective actors," and thus it is a topic of interest for social movement research (Castelli Gattinara and Pirro 2019: 447). Donatella della Porta (2020b) locates backlash movements such as radical right milieus within broad networks of interactions and complex political processes; mobilization of resources and appropriation of opportunities in American and European party systems are key to account for the spread of retrograde frames. In addition, Andrea Pirro and Martín Portos (2021) recently nuanced the idea of protest and broader non-electoral participation as the foremost prerogative of the left. While left-wing people are more mobilized outside the polling station than right-wingers, populist right voters are far from a demobilized subset, as they engage more in non-electoral activities than non-populist right voters—and generally as much as left-wing voters. In fact, taking into account libertarian–authoritarian attitudes and individuals' positioning towards migrants and redistribution allows us to challenge the common notions of populism as inherently distrustful and apathetic, and observe that populist politics is expanding beyond the electoral arena and to the right (Pirro and Portos 2021).

PATHS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

With economic globalization as the target of left-wing constituencies and cultural globalization as the focus of right-wing milieus, some collective action frames have spread across countries and brought about transnational organizing and protest campaigns. In fact, several developments testify to the rise of transnational public participation. As Amelung and Baumgarten noted,

> under the paradigm of "good governance", participatory governance and deliberative democracy have found their way into the buzzwords of international political organisations; forms of involving civil society organisations as "stakeholders" have become part of the standard repertoire of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the UN, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. The same institutions publish handbooks and manuals that advise policy makers and administrators to use participatory tools and devices to integrate citizens and civil society groups into their decision making. Furthermore, there are increasingly transnational networks of public participation professionals whose public participation expertise is stored on the internet platforms of international expert networks, and distributed globally in training events for public participation practitioners. (2017: 12)

While there were significant efforts to involve citizens such as the pan-European deliberation experiments Meeting of Minds and European Citizen Consultations, the structured and informal involvement of citizens has by and large remained an exception (Amelung and Baumgarten 2017: 12–13; della Porta 2009b). Democratic innovations, among which transnational referendums, participatory budgeting, scenario workshops, and citizens' juries, are often implemented across online or hybrid spaces, and have been key for the development of transnational publics (see Baiocchi and Ganuza 2016; Soneryd and Amelung 2015; della Porta 2020a). Yet, the forms and paths of internationalization have varied in time and for different actors, and have been translated locally in very diverse ways. Diffusion processes are multidimensional, requiring scholars to employ a heterogeneity of theoretical perspectives and research methodologies (Givan et al. 2010). In fact,

> Despite the variations on the what, how, and why spread over the context of such mobilisations, focusing on the same time frame and, to some extent, the same types of mobilisations across different countries offers us the opportunity to compare diffusion mechanisms as they occurred (or not) within a quite homogeneous set of case studies, although considered from different perspectives. (della Porta and Mattoni 2014)

As Mark Beissinger (2002) noted in his research on the breakdown of the Soviet Union, and Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik (2011) in their analysis on the Orange Revolutions, ideas might also spread where conditions are less favorable, but their capacity to produce successful mobilization is then constrained. Especially, structural differences might jeopardize that assessment of similarities, which is a relevant conducive condition for cross-national diffusion. Moments of economic instability are often considered as less propitious for mass mobilization than periods of economic growth. Latecomers within a wave of protest might also find particular difficulties in catching up with mobilization and so could countries in which strong waves of protest were on their declining phases.

Besides diffusion, the development of transnational social movements involves different paths of action defined as domestication, externalization and transnationalization (Tarrow 2005; della Porta and Tarrow 2005). Processes of domestication develop when international organizations affect national politics, triggering discontent, that however targets especially the national governments that implement policies required by international organizations. For instance, in the early 1990s, protests against the EU addressed the national governments that applied its directives and policies (Imig and Tarrow 2001). Externalization processes are at work when discontent with national policies is expressed instead in international arenas, in the attempt to find allies that can put pressure on domestic decision makers. This has been the case of several campaigns calling the UN or the EU to take a position against violation of civil rights and political freedom in various countries.

The GJM has been considered as a typical example of transnationalization, as social movement networks mobilized worldwide, targeting international organizations. In recent times, solidarization has developed through reciprocal references and horizontal ties between movements active in different countries but with the perception of a common global enemy. As della Porta and Mattoni (2014) summarized, in the GJM diffusion was

> based on a global organisational network in which social movement organisations as well as grassroots activist groups had a relevant role in supporting (and spreading) transnational mobilisations like counter-summits. Partially supported through information and communication technologies managed within the social movement milieu, and in particular by activist mailing lists and alternative informational websites, this global organisational network was also thickened due to transnational, but also national, gatherings like the social forum, whose practices rested on a collective conception of politics based on activist groups and organisations.

Processes of cross-national diffusion of frames and repertoires of action are also at work through both direct, face-to-face contacts and mediated ones. Direct forms of diffusion seem to have been especially important within some geopolitical areas: Egyptian activists learned from Tunisians, thanks also to some direct contacts. Egyptians exerted indirect influence on Spanish Indignados, who were instead in direct contact with Greek activists, but they were also very relevant in steering the Occupy movement (Romanos 2016). Across distant countries, social media helped quick information exchange and mutual learning (see Roos and Oikonomakis 2014). Some protests were moreover called worldwide—as was the case of the Global Day of Action launched by the Spanish Indignados on October 15, 2011, which saw protest events taking place in 951 cities in 82 countries (Perugorría and Tejerina 2013). Transnational coordination was very grassroots: not much embedded in structured movement organizations, it was rather based on fluid networks, participatory web platforms, and micro-blogging spheres (della Porta and Mattoni 2014). While activists in the GJM often belonged to various social movement organizations, the massive participation in the anti-austerity protests in several countries was based upon the mobilization of "first comers," especially among those who were suffering more of the consequences of the crisis. While emerging from existing social movement organizations, that kept mobilizing during the protests (Gerbaudo 2012), the involvement of common people was praised among anti-austerity protests. As Jeff Juris (2012) noted, while in the GJM the logic of networking in the organization of mobilizations, with intense frame bridging during the campaigns of the GJM, was, if not substituted, at least accompanied by a logic of aggregation among individual participants that often used social media to come together around specific events. In fact, while the GJM presented itself as the space of encounter of various progressive movements—a "movement of movements"—praising their differences, the anti-austerity movements claimed to represent the overwhelming majority, "the people" or the "99%," indignant against the corruption of the elites (see della Porta and Mattoni 2014).

Also, in the anti-austerity protests, transnationalization of protest happened through a marked diffusion of ideas, practices, and frames (della Porta and Tarrow 2005) that was facilitated by the perception of a shared condition, that is, a global crisis. This helped the cross-national traveling of a form of protest such as the protest camps that spread from Tahrir Square in Egypt to Puerta del Sol in Madrid, and from Zuccotti Park in New York to many squares and parks in many other countries of the world, including Gezi Park in Turkey (della Porta and Atak 2016). While not resonating equally in all countries, when and where it spread, the *acampadas* became entrenched in the very identity of the movements with occupied spaces, becoming "vibrant sites of human interaction that modelled alternative communities and generated intense feeling of solidarity" (Juris 2012: 268).

Aiming at reconstructing a public space that had been lost in neoliberal times, the visions and practices that characterized the protest camps also spread to many and diverse countries. Especially, the experimentation with participatory democracy during the informal and formal gatherings in the squares challenged existing forms of representative democracy. In this elaboration of radical imageries related to the very idea of democracy, thus operating a semantic renovation of the terms linked to these imageries and the experimentation with participatory democratic practices allowed activists to experience, not just to imagine, different conceptions of democracy. Also, attention to deliberation became more central in the movements against austerity resonating with (more traditional) participatory visions, but also with deliberative conceptions that underline the importance of creating multiple public spaces. During anti-austerity protests, the prefiguration of participatory and deliberative democratic forms acquired particular relevance, not only in the movements of 2011, but also later on, for example in the Nuit Debut in France in 2016 (Felicetti and della Porta 2018). In fact,

> democratic quality here is in fact measured by the possibility to elaborate ideas within discursive, open, and public arenas, where citizens play an active role in identifying problems, but also in elaborating possible solutions … Indeed, this conception of democracy is prefigured by the very same protestors that occupied the squares, transforming them into public spheres made up of 'normal citizens'. It is an attempt to create high-quality discursive democracy that recognises the equal rights of all (not only delegates and experts) to speak (and be respected) in a public and plural space, open to discussion and deliberation on themes that range from situations suffered to concrete solutions to specific problems, from the elaboration of proposals on common goods to the formation of collective solidarity and emerging identities.
>
> (della Porta and Mattoni 2014)

Anti-austerity protests were characterized, however, by selective diffusion. Some of the ideas developed during the 2011 protests traveled well from Tunisia to Egypt, and then to Spain, Greece, and the United States, but not so much to countries which, like Germany or

France, or the United Kingdom, were less hit by the recession, but not even to some countries that were indeed hit by the recession, such as Portugal, Italy, or the Czech Republic. The financial crisis had different characteristics in different countries, for instance in terms of public debt and state dependency on foreign banks.

Diffusion has played a pivotal role in the transnationalization of the GJM, allowing for the spreading of several social movement features, from forms of organization to forms of contention, from one country to another (della Porta and Tarrow 2005), but it also occurred in the anti-austerity protests. The forms of diffusion changed however, being thick in the former and thin instead in the latter. Anti-austerity protests were considered as examples of thin diffusion as

> information travelled quickly from individual to individual through social networking sites, frequently in combination with portable mobile devices like smart phones. The ability of individuals to communicate the content of protests was therefore important to spreading imageries in the global wave of protest. More important than social movement organisations and social movement groups were activists who designed and provided web platforms able to function as content aggregators, to navigate the impressive amount of information produced in the framework of protests. The diffusion of information on the protest was therefore characterised by a weak organisational process of transnationalisation. Occasions for face-to-face communication might have improved in time at the individual level—activists travelling cheaply and often—but collective arenas for transnational encounters like the social forum were less central. Indeed, the protest camps like the Spanish *acampadas* quickly achieved world visibility, but were mainly national, if not local in the range of people involved.
>
> (della Porta and Mattoni 2014)

During anti-austerity protests, days of transnational solidarity with Greece took place, for instance, on February 18, 2012 in about 19 non-Greek cities, local branches of the IMF and Greek embassies across Europe were targeted; on January 19, 2013, solidarity rallies and actions in front of Greek consulates and embassies were organized in 26 cities across the world, while demonstrations also occurred in 25 cities within Greece (Kousis 2014). Moreover, international claims referring to other countries were present in domestic demonstrations. In Portugal, "a special focus is set on social movements from other countries facing austerity measures and heavily indebted. The protests in Greece have been used as a thread, claiming 'We consider ourselves Greek'. The slogan 'Spain! Greece! Ireland! Portugal! Our struggle is international!' was prominently proclaimed during the 2011 demonstrations" (Baumgarten 2013).

Transnational collective action, characterizing the GJM (della Porta and Tarrow 2005) that targeted international organizations through transnational action, has also been visible as anti-austerity protests targeted the European Central Bank and the IMF, as well as rating agencies. Activists linked to the 15M mobilization in Spain called for a Global Action Day against capitalism and austerity for October 15, 2011, with protests counted in 951 cities in 82 countries under the slogan "United for Global Change" (Perugorría and Tejerina 2013), and was then repeated in 2012. On November 14, 2012, trade unions organized a European strike against austerity that involved the major unions in Portugal, Spain, Greece, Italy, Cyprus, and Malta. However, "While these mobilisations certainly had a transnational flavour, they did not imply the gathering of activists coming from various European countries within the same protest site, as regularly happened in the case of the Global Justice Movement" (della Porta and Mattoni 2014). From May 16 to 19, 2012, four Blockupy days of protests, organized by a transnational network of activists, aimed at blocking the activities of the ECB in Frankfurt to denounce the European financial policies and austerity measures implemented in many European countries. In the following years, activists traveled from various European countries to reach Germany and engage in several protest actions, including the attempt at a peaceful blockade of the ECB. In the case of Blockupy, transnationalization was, however, limited, as the organization and participation remained mainly German.

Conclusion

Different actors in different waves of contention expressed discontent for a common global trend of neoliberal capitalism. While right-wing populism attacked cosmopolitan visions promoting exclusive nationalist identities, central to the framing of progressive movements on the Left was, everywhere, the condemnation of extreme social inequality and/or related political corruption, and the quest instead for justice and democracy. Transnationalization happened in different forms in different waves of global mobilization. The processes had different degrees of thick versus thin diffusion, following different paths.

These observations should be combined when reflecting on the future prospects for transnationalization of mobilizations. First of all, we cannot expect the globalization of contention to follow a growing trend. While a power shift at global level can stimulate global unrest (as the power shift at national level did during the creation of nation-states), the mounting of global organizations and global action is costly for social movement and broader civil society actors. We might therefore expect that, while ideas will diffuse cross-nationally, actors will follow multilevel strategies, using leverage at local, national, and international levels. Transformation in capitalism as well as changes in political opportunities certainly affect these choices, opening and closing channels for international mobilization. Given the importance that communication always had for movements, technological transformations certainly influence the process of cross-national diffusion. Beside strategic calculations, however, progressive agents appear to be driven by a deep normative commitment to global justice and international solidarity. Learning from previous cycles of contention, they will also inherit repertoires of global mobilizations and transnational networks that are adapted to further campaigns.

Finally, as diffusion happens in space, but also in time, forms of action can be imported from past experiences traveling from a historical context to a new one (Flesher Fominaya and Montañés 2014). Translation, experimentation, and deliberation mechanisms allow a specific tactic to be dislocated from its original context into another (Chabot 2010: 106) as participants engage with ideas and practices rooted in mobilization experiences that took place in different historical moments and/or countries (Wood 2012). Learning from each other's experiences, but also reinterpreting them, is embedded in practices of remembering and comparing present and past protest contexts on the side of activists.

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CHAPTER 51

YOUNG WOMEN, GENDER, AND THE FUTURE OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

JUDITH BESSANT

SINCE 2018 we have witnessed a novel development in politics globally: the entry of girls and young women into the political field in large numbers, with many assuming leadership roles and taking centre stage.[1] They are getting a lot of attention and becoming a political force to be reckoned with. Observers of the crowds that took to the streets in late 2019 calling for measures to mitigate global warming, noted they were unlike any previous campaigns: "They were young. They were diverse. And they were overwhelmingly girls" (Kaplan 2019). Research confirms the gendered and age-based character of this phenomenon. A survey of organizers and participants in one Washington DC climate strike, found for example,, that 68 percent of organizers and 58 percent of participants were young and female (Fisher 2016). One poll by *The Washington Post* and the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 46 percent of girls said climate change was "extremely important" to them, compared with 23 percent of boys (Hamel et al. 2019).

Besides marching, organizing rallies, making speeches, producing art, and engaging in online actions, some young women like Sweden's Greta Thunberg, Canada's Autumn Peltiers, and Australia's Harriet O'Shea Carre speak directly to world leaders in international forums. Some engaged in no less memorable acts of silence. Who can forget Emma Gonzalez's six minutes silence in her speech before tens of thousands of demonstrators at the *March for Our Lives* March in 2018 to mark the killing of 17 people at a Parkland high school shooting? In North America, girls have become leaders like 16-year-old Isra Hirsi, the Executive Director of America's Youth Climate Strike, while Canada's Autumn Peltier was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize for three years. There are many similar examples of such political participation.

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[1] While 'the Squad', a group of six US Democratic young women 'of color' winning office in the USA House of Representative is indicative of a significant shift taking place, what is even more momentous is the entry of girls and very young women into politics

This is a significant change. A large body of literature confirms the common-sense academic insight that historically most research on youth participation and most youth participation programs focused on young men (Hollands 2012; Kimball 2019). Chettiah et al. (2017: 7) for example, note: "The literature focused on young people's political participation was mostly gender blind, and was therefore male biased."

There is also the long-standing disposition to protect "the young" from "premature" exposure to the hazards of public life. As Cohen argued, children, young people, and women have long been "consigned to the private world of the family, removed from public life"—ostensibly for their own good and for the good of the polity (2003: 222, see also Giugni and Grasso 2020: 591–607). The streets as public spaces have long been considered "dangerous places" that threaten the safety and moral well-being of women and especially young women. This "common sense" epitomized in reports like UNICEF's *The State of the World's Children* (2019), reminds readers that city streets are especially dangerous for children:

> Millions of children remain homeless, without care and protection' because they're places where children live and work ('Children may work as ragpickers or shoe-shiners, serve at tea stalls, sell cigarettes on the street).

To this we can add the virtual streets, that is social media, represented as dangerous spaces where "teenagers" and young women are "at risk" from cyber-bullying, sexting, "FoMo" ("fear of missing out") and mental illness (Setty 2020).

Yet as Nishiyama (2019) notes, this emphasis on danger and protection obscures the fact that increasing numbers of girls and young women are appearing on the streets in cities around the world using social media. They are doing this not as vulnerable "youth at risk," but as high-profile and articulate political actors.

Historically, girls and young women have been excluded from, or rendered marginal to the political field. Yet there is nothing new about children and young people engaging in politics, whether it is electoral politics or activism in social movements (Grasso and Bessant 2018; Bessant 2021).[2] What is distinctive about contemporary youth participation in politics now is the entry of so many girls and young women onto the political stage. This is the focus of this chapter.

This movement, along with other developments such has "the rise" of nationalist and populist movements, highlights the crisis of legitimacy facing the neoliberal, globalizing order in which capitalist democracies have become "façade democracies." The recent irruption of girl children and young women into politics has not yet, however, received the attention of researchers or commentators it deserves.

I address the following questions in this chapter. First, how can we understand why so many young women and girls are now entering the field of politics and playing high-profile, effective roles? Secondly, are there gendered dimensions operating that help explain this? For example, were girls and young women disproportionately affected by the issues that move them to act? Finally, does this signal that something exceptional is taking place in terms of political participation and politics more generally?

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[2] This is not to forget the early twentieth-century suffragettes the 'third wave' feminists of the 1990s, women's action in the early twentieth century (e.g., Riot Grrrls, Pussy Riot), or the ongoing struggles by women for gender equality, women's health, and civil rights.

I begin by describing some of the ways in which girls and young women are entering the political field, noting it is predominantly a movement into contentious or democratic agonistic politics occurring in extra-parliamentary sites. I then consider how this might be understood before asking whether there are specifically gendered elements operating. I then consider the significance of this in respect to what it means for "youth participation" and the role of digital technologies.

The State of Play

Climate change movements like Extinction Rebellion point to the significant role of young women. Those associated with Extinction Rebellion, for example, argue that "since 2014, women have been the public face of the climate movement. They led the first People's Climate March, which attracted over 400,000 people worldwide, most of them women" (Holt 2019). A small body of research also documents how girls and young women have become dominant players in recent social movements (Wahlstrom et al. 2019; Bowman 2019: 295–305).

As Wahlstrom and colleagues (2019) observe, the age composition of European street demonstrations began changing significantly after 2010. One earlier 2009 study of climate protest participants in Brussels, Copenhagen, and London, for example, reported median ages of between 32 and 48 years with no obvious gender profile (Wahlström et al. 2013). By 2019 this had changed significantly. In 2019, the #Strike for Climate movement organized four major actions on March 15, followed by events on May 24 and 20–27 September 2019, and November 29, 2019. The September strikes were peaceful demonstrations around the globe in 185 countries, over 6,000 events and an estimated 7.6 million participants (Chase-Dunn and Almeida 2020). A study of the March in Europe confirmed that protestors aged 14 to 19 were the largest, with an average share of 45 percent across countries, and an overall median age of 21 years.

Some accounts revealed the protests were strongly dominated by young women. On average, young women played a disproportionately large role in the strike for climate events: women comprised 70 percent of participants in Amsterdam, Warsaw, and Truro. By comparison, in previous demonstrations surveyed by these researchers, the average was 47 percent female (Walgrave et al. 2016: 83–104). A larger study by de Moor et al. (2020) of the September 2019 events in 19 cities around the world, confirmed the novelty and significance of primary-school girls and female secondary students as initiators, organizers, and participants in climate activism on a large scale. De Moor et al. (2020) also highlighted this when they observed that nearly 60 percent of participants were female. While women were the majority across every age group, young women strongly outnumbered young men among participants under 19 (72%). In September, women dominated among this youngest age group, even more than in March.

This is not to overlook differences between countries. Younger participants under 19 years old dominated marches in Italy, Denmark, Romania, and the Czech Republic. By contrast, those aged 46 and older accounted for almost 50 percent of participants in Stockholm, Sydney, Brussels, and New York (de Moor 2020: 11). There was some gender diversity as well. In Europe the proportion of women remained relatively stable in three countries (Belgium, Switzerland, and Sweden), increased in Italy alone (by 5%), and decreased in three countries (by nearly 11% in Poland and Germany and by 4.5% in Austria). Belgium was the only country with fewer female (46%) than male (53%) participants in the march, and one of the only two countries where women comprised less than 50 percent of participants in September (the other being Germany with 47% female participants) (de Moor et al. 2020:13). In Australia, researchers observed that more women attended climate change protests than men. Women constituted 58 percent of those surveyed in the face-to-face survey while 67 percent of those surveyed online were women (Collin et al. 2020 a: 39). The increasing presence of girls and young women in the politics of the climate movement suggests the need to ask if gender-specific factors are operating.

Gender

Dramatic increases in the number of girls and young women participating in politics and the emergence of so many young female leaders represents a significant change in a field traditionally dominated by men (Taylor 2014). To date, however, there is little work exploring why it is that girls and young women are now playing such prominent roles in politics.

In what follows I consider how the gendered character of youth participation in this moment might be explained. Are there any distinctive factors that account for this? Are girls or women disproportionately affected by the impact of global warming? Or is there an argument to be made that because women benefit less from maintaining a status quo which continues to reproduce gender inequities, therefore they are more likely to engage in social movements and to protest (Collin et al. 2020 a: 39)?

Does the prevailing context, one that is highly charged in respect to "women's issues," like the rise of the #MeToo movement and a growing public awareness of the pervasive problems of gender inequity, sexual violence, and gender discrimination, encourage young women to enter the political field? Or, do we need to consider the interplay between age and gender in ways emphasized by the Year 9 Australian student Harriet O'Shea:

> The younger you are, the more you will be affected so we need to be part of the decisions with politicians who won't see the worst of it. . . . I should be in school and I wish I was, but people's lives are more important. When politicians step up, we'll go back to class. (O'Shea 2019)

She continued: "Kids can't vote, so this is the only way we can change anything. It will be too late soon and people are already literally dying" (O'Shea 2019). Identified by some as the "new climate precariat," is this a response by young people who see their future cut short and their opportunity to live well seriously diminished (Holmberg and Alvinius 2021)?

There has been some analysis of the gendered impact of global warming and responses to it (Buckingham 2020). That research shows how climate change, war, and gun violence affects everyone, but not equally (Georgetown Institute for Women, 2015). While the observation that "women benefit less from maintaining a status quo which . . . reproduce[s] gender inequity" (Collin et al. 2020:39) is true, does this explain why, at this particular time, we are seeing such powerful political processes initiated by girls and young women? Given that gendered disadvantage has existed for a long time, does this fully explain why young women are acting as they are *now*?

It is also true that women are disproportionately affected by climate change which exacerbates gender inequality (McCarthy 2020). Taking a global perspective when compared to men, women have a reduced capacity to protect themselves because they are more likely to live in poverty, less likely to have their rights protected, and more likely to experience abuse of their human rights, violence, and family instability (McCarthy 2020). Climate-related hazards also produce higher workloads for women and ill health compared to men (McCarthy 2020). This disadvantage is particularly evident in the Global South where large numbers of people live on or below an austere measure of poverty. UNDP figures indicate that 80 percent of people displaced by climate change are women and that natural disasters have a disproportionately detrimental effect on those living in poverty, 70 percent of whom are women (UNDP 2020: 5).

Considerations like this may help explain why movements like XR ("Extinction Rebellion") mobilize young women, emphasizing the gendered impact of climate change. Extinction Rebellion groups highlight: "the disproportionate impact of the climate and ecological emergency on women … and the resulting increase in violence, hardship and rape. The effects of climate breakdown are already being felt by our sisters in parts of the Global South" (Aidt 2020). A 2020 report for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature demonstrates how environmental degradation is also leading to increased violence against women, including rape[3] (Castañeda Camey et al. 2020).

Researchers also established that women are more likely than men to show concern for the environment and to support pro-environmental policies or generally to act to mitigate global warming (Joireman and Lui 2020: 391–400). This is not to suggest that all women respond, as their capacity to exercise political agency differs according to their circumstances. Do these factors explain the increasing interest by so many girls and young women in politics and in playing a leadership role after 2018? Does it necessarily follow that large numbers of girls and young women will be motivated to become politically active because they bear the brunt of climate change, gender inequity, and systemic forms of gendered violence? If so, how then do we explain the large number of women who do not participant in politics? What does such non-participation indicate about claims that gender inequity, systemic gendered violence, and the fact that women are disproportionately affected by global warming are what moved young women to act? In other words, can an argument reliant on a general condition (gendered inequality and oppression) fully explain a smaller social phenomenon, in this case, why so many girls and women began to participate in politics?

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[3] Climate change that results in floods, droughts, and fires can cause shortages in household food supplies. This can 'force' some parents to marry off their girl children (against their will) earlier than 'normal' to relieve the 'burden' of having to feed another child. Environmental degradation also places a heavier burden of labor on girls and women. This can mean, for example, that 'women's jobs' like fetching water become more onerous and dangerous. In drought, for example, girls have to walk greater distances because wells in their immediate area have become fewer because they dried up. This requirement to walk long distances increases their risk of sexual assault in regions where armed gangs are prevalent. The same applies for tasks like fetching firewood. The scarcity of food and no income can also result in payments for scarce resources being made in the form of forced sex from women and girls. Women and girls are also more likely to die during 'natural' disasters in regions where they are prohibited by custom from being in public spaces alone. For this reason, some are less likely to seek protection in emergency shelters where they are in close proximity to men.

While gender inequality and oppression can explain in part what is happening, such accounts need to be considered alongside other explanations of why so many girls and young women are now entering politics. Thus, I now consider one other explanation for why so many have recently been drawn to politics—namely the strategies to attract and mobilize newcomers.

Recruitment and Politics of Solidarity

Girls and young women are actively encouraged to participate in climate actions, gender equity campaigns, gun control, and anti-war actions. This encouragement is coming not just from those who organize those actions, but also from agencies central to "mainstream" politics like the UN's Paris Agreement, which specifically encourage more women to get involved in decision making. The UN and WEF for example, have long had strategies for policymaking inclusive of young women (UN Women 2020, World Economic Forum 2019).

Equally important is the way that girls and young women who are already participating inspire and actively encourage other girls and young women to join in. Emma Gonzalez inspired Greta Thunberg to do what she did. O'Shea Carre started the Australia's "School Strike 4 Climate" after reading about what Thunberg did to begin the global student climate movement (Robb 2019). Thunberg described Malala Yousafzai as a role model (the girl shot in 2012 by the Taliban in Pakistan, after campaigning for girls' education) (@ GretaThunberg February 16, 2020). Uganda's Leah Namugerwa and many others discovered what Thunberg was doing through Twitter and were "inspired" to engage politically (Crowe 2019).

The #Strikeforclimate movement is mostly organized by, and targets young people. Like other forms of political participation (to regulate guns, promote gender equity, etc.) it involves young people demanding that adults take responsibility to safeguard the lives and futures of young people (Knops 2021). According to Wahlstrom et al. (2019), for example, one reason why so many young people are mobilized has to do with the school settings in which the strikes originated. Since that movement started, the frontrunners in that initiative invited their peers who tended to be students, rather than inviting non-school-related contacts (2019). This also applies to other school-based actions like the USA's gun control lobby. This version of the "homophily" principle of social networks ("like attracts like") and "the desire to belong" means we can expect initially that a young core dominated by girls and young women will gather a circle of participants around them (Renstrom et al. 2020).

Politics of Solidarity

The fact that large numbers of young women and girls are entering the political field can also be explained in terms of the politics of solidarity. When Mala Yousafzai met Thunberg in 2020 she posted a photo of them both, their arms around each other on Instagram and Twitter with the caption "She's the only friend I'd skip school for" (@Malal 2020, February 26). It was a tweet that set off 99.4k retweets, many comments, and "likes." This kind of solidarity is grounded in moral emotions like empathy and indignation (Fraser 1998: 425–429, Knops 2021).

This solidarity can be seen not just between the young women themselves, but also with others including some high-profile politicians, celebrities, and other influential figure who provide considerable social capital. I refer here, for example, to the photograph of Kamala Harris then US Vice-President-elect smiling with Yousafzai that was posted on Twitter and retweeted 9.3k times. Similar images of Yousafzai discussing girls' education with the Duke and Duchess of Sussex were posted on social media spreading to blogs and mainstream news. Other high-profile women like Michele Obama enacted similar solidarity by being photographed with Yousafzai (https://www.picuki.com/profile/malala).

As Featherstone (2012) argued, we should not assume that solidarity occurs due to pre-existing similarities. This becomes apparent by observing the diversity of the young women now acting in solidarity with each other. Featherstone's (2012) focus is on the practices that *create* solidarity and how similarities or *relations* are made that ground one's commitment to another. Thus, understood relationally, we see how solidarity and contentious–agonistic democratic politics is constitutive of politics. It is not simply a gendered or age-based homogeneity. Rather it is a solidarity that involves recognizing each another's humanity and shared political interests.

The solidarity expressed by an international group of scientists demonstrates how such support and authoritative affirmation is also constitutive of politics. In their letter published in the journal *Science* they declared: "[T]he world's youth have begun to persistently demonstrate for the protection of the climate and other foundations of human well-being" (Hagedorn et al. 2019: 139–140). They continued that it was their

> social, ethical and scholarly responsibility to state in no uncertain terms: Only if humanity acts quickly and resolutely can we limit global warming, halt the ongoing mass extinction of animal and plant species, and preserve the natural basis for the food supply and well-being of present and future generations. (Ibid.)

In all these ways solidarity can also be transformative because it can produce new "political relations and spaces" and its political articulation can be shaped through various practices (Featherstone 2012: 5).

These practices of solidarity are also part of the recent phenomenon some call the "participatory condition" which can be used to help explain the recent entry of so many girls and young women into politics.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE "PARTICIPATORY CONDITION"

The "evolution of new media technologies, the expansion of various communities invested in media production" and decision making is what Barney and colleagues argue enabled a new "participatory condition" (2016: vii). The "participatory culture" courtesy of new media, is enhancing relational possibilities and participation, the expansion of which has been so large it "represents the very condition of our contemporaneity" (Barney et al. 2016: xi).

The "participatory condition" points to the ways we are experiencing the expansion of participation in politics as a relational possibility that enhances democracy, including direct democracy, collaborative commons, and citizen journalism (Barney et al. 2016: vii).

The complexity of the "participatory condition" is also evident when we acknowledge how it has also enabled the creation of digital silos creating "fake news" and increased digital surveillance (Zuboff 2019).

The "participatory condition" allows many young people and especially girls and young women to engage effectively in the public sphere in ways previously impossible. In the 1970s, feminist cultural theorists McRobbie and Gill (1976), made useful observations about gender, technology, and the productive cultural and political activities of young women in private space. They documented the cultural activities of young women that were missing from accounts of subculture that focused on white males and social class. Their argument was that girls' invisibility in the youth subculture literature did not mean they were not participating. Rather, their political and cultural activities did not take place in the public space where it was visible, but in the private space of the home. In those private spaces they designed new styles, created new language and music, and engaged in politics. Later, others like Harris (2001: 128–138) documented how new technologies provided opportunities for creating politics and places for debating and refiguring their place in the world and social change agendas (see also Kimball 2019).

Mai and Lane (2016: 900) also note how in "girlhood studies," virtual spaces have been recognized as extensions of girls' private rooms. They have become "virtual streets" for activism and being heard. Likewise, in one study of Egypt's Tahrir Square and Occupy Oakland in 2011, Ng (2012: 33) found that most of the female bloggers were as active in street protests as they were on social media. In effect, new technology facilitated the capacities of young women to create new spaces, identities, and "mini movements," as demonstrated by cases like "Riot Grrrls" to Russia's "Pussy Riot" (Bessant 2014).

Something is Afoot: The Significance of Activism

The rejection of traditional politics and appearance of so many young women in the public sphere suggests something exceptional is happening. It is a movement dominated by girls and young women who are rejecting traditional politics, including the governance model of youth participation. This also points to the ways young people not "only bear witness to the world's crisis, they are active political agents 'constructing a new world' " (Bowman 2019: 2).

Leveraging Truth and calling out Hypocrisy

Varshini Prakash, 27 year old co-founder of the 'Sunrise Movement' described the situation as "adults asleep at the wheel."[4] The political participation of so many young people in part is a response to a growing disillusionment on their part with the "normal" leadership. It is a disappointment with the lack of integrity and unreliability of "the adults in the room." As Dardelia (2020) reported, "[D]istrust of public institutions dominated by older elites"… "at all time low," and this is exacerbated amongst young people (see also Knops 2021). This frustration is a reaction to repeated broken promises about things that matter. These young people are fed up with conventional leaders claiming they are virtuous, but who continually come to grief by giving priority to retaining power over working on behalf of those they represent. As Sloam and Henn (2018) argue, government policies have left many young people feeling ignored and marginalized. This they argue contributes to a deepening mistrust of, and antagonism toward "the political class" and the withdrawal from electoral politics by young people (2018).

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[4] K. Ottesen 2020, *The Washington Post*, September 22: https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/adults-are-asleep-at-the-wheel-in-climate-crisis-says-co-founder-of-youth-led-activist-group/2020/09/21/960327f0-e7ac-11ea-bc79-834454439a44_story.html).

With this in mind, we might do well to adopt a different conception of the "crisis of democracy" to the official discourse that has long identified young people and their alleged political disengagement as the problem. We might recognize the "crisis of democracy" as the legacy of decades of neoliberal policies by ostensibly progressive centrist and right-wing governments, that led to unprecedented social inequality that saw young people being worse off than any previous generation (Picketty 2019).

The kind of youth political participation we are now witnessing can also be explained as a recognition by many young people of the corrupt nature of public institutions. It is a state of affairs that is incompatible with their own ethical frames and commitments to addressing substantive political issues they feel deeply about (Benedicto and Ramos 2018: 1–30; Knops 2021). The growth of movements involving young people committed to changing policies increased in the context of an absence of effective action by political and corporate leaders (Giugni and Grasso 2019).

The political actions themselves are also a response to the hypocrisy, elaborate follies, and egregious acts of greed exhibited by corporate and political elites. This includes corporate malfeasance coming out of Wall Street that led to the 2008 "global financial crisis" and subsequent taxpayer funded bailouts of those responsible. It includes the continued commitment by political elites to "unlimited growth" and continuing faith in the idea of "Western progress," that many young people now see as a dangerous and outdated part of the modern imaginary (Knops 2021). It includes the accumulating evidence of the negative effects of decades of neoliberal policies like unprecedented social inequality which disproportionately affect young people (Bessant et al. 2017).

We are witnessing reactions by those fed up with the broken promises and the façades created to persuade citizens that democracy works in the ways promised. As Thunberg argued: "No matter where you are, that burden, they leave to us teenagers, us children." She continued:

> Everywhere I have been the situation is more or less the same. The people in power, their beautiful words are the same. . . .The number of politicians and celebrities who want to take selfies with us are the same. The empty promises are the same. The lies are the same and the inaction is the same . . . Nowhere have I found anyone in power who dares to tell it like it is. . . . It should not be that way. We should not be the ones who are fighting for the future, and yet here we are. (Thunberg, cited Carlisle 2019)

Emma Gonzalez advocating for gun control similarly argued after the mass killings in her school in the USA:

> The people in the government who were voted into power are lying to us . . . And us kids seem to be the only ones who notice and our parents to call BS. Companies trying to make

> caricatures of the teenagers these days, saying that all we are self-involved and trend-obsessed, and they hush us into submission when our message doesn't reach the ears of the nation, we are prepared to call BS. (Gonzalez 2018)

Today many girls and young women assuming leadership positions do so because they are disenchanted by the failure of formal leaders to act effectively on decisive issues which jeopardize their prospect of having a future life on Earth within a relatively short timeframe.

Disillusionment: Moving Away from Consensus Politics

That so many young people are confronted by such failures and by their own disenfranchisement helps explain why many are moving away from a politics of consensus making (Walther et al. 2020). It helps explain the shift toward a democratic, agonistic politics that allows participants to appear as they are, to argue for what they see as important, and to contest what they see as problematic.

What many young people participating in politics want is the most basic rights to the necessities of life. Most prominent is the *right to a life on Earth that is habitable*. To this we can add the right to gender equity, safety from gun violence, and freedom from the terror of war. Today threats to the most basic right of all, *a right to a future* is moving many young people to act and reject what they see as the failures of the old order to deliver on promises of liberal democracy, and life-chances that include a secure job, decent income, affordable housing, and the ability to support a family.

Political emotions like righteous anger and indignation are blossoming as new practices by new political actors who cannot and do not want to wait to "grow-up" so they might then get to enact change. Prompting this shift from electoral politics is a growing recognition that politics is "irreducibly *ethical*" and that the current gap between promises and "delivery" is unacceptably wide (Critchley 2007). In this way, Arendt's (1958) concept of natality as a moment when newcomers enter politics with capacities to open new possibilities hitherto unimagined is on display. Historically, this is what initiated significant transformation.

What is now taking place can be understood as expressions of a deep disillusionment with the capacity of today's leaders and political institutions to represent and intervene to secure the interests among many other groups of young people. To this extent, it is recognized that the formal avenues available for youth participation are seriously wanting (Walther et al. 2020).

Rejecting the Governance Model of Youth Participation

It is significant that most action by young women and young people generally, is taking place outside the formal parliamentary politics. It is also taking place well outside the traditional venues established for what governments call "youth participation." This support claims that we are witnessing something significant, a clear rejection of conventional politics, and the well- entrenched model of what I call a "governance model of youth participation" established from 1990s, ostensibly to facilitate young people's political participation (Bessant 2003: 87–100).

That governance model was created after the "discovery" of three related problems. The first was the discovery of a growing popular disengagement from formal politics and increasing apathy said to be particularly bad amongst young people (Harrop 2001: 295–313). "The solution" was to create youth participation programs designed to mitigate that problem by giving young people a say in politics, decision making and opportunities to learn about political processes so they become "active citizens" (Bessant and Grasso 2019: 1–12).

The second problem that prompted the development of these programs was a growing anxiety in many quarters about the rising levels of civil unrest described as a risk to the liberal capitalist social order. The third related reason was national "security" and "the rise" of radicalization and extremism amongst young people. The establishment of youth participation programs, it was argued, would help counter "the youth terrorist" problem (Darden 2019).

From the 1990s, youth participation was part of a wider policy discourse on "active citizenship," "inclusive society," "partnerships," "engagement," and "consultation," coming from those concerned for the future of the liberal democratic capitalist order. Young people after all are "the future," and if they are apathetic and not committed to politics then prospects for its continuance looked dim. Thus, youth participation programs held the promise of saving the liberal democracy. To meet that challenge those programs were designed and managed by expert adults to impart knowledge and liberal democratic values. The aim was to "engage" and "integrate" "youth" to prevent their alienation and disengagement.

Given this took place in a context marked by consensus politics and neoliberalism, it is not surprising that this model was designed to reinforce that practice of securing general agreement on critical issues needed to preserve the existing state of affairs. It was (is) a model shaped by:

- "a need" to re-integrate or manage young people represented as disinterested in politics, a task requiring tight monitoring and supervision.
- an emphasis on the "obligations" of "adults" to protect young people, to initiate, lead and manage the development of their "civic capacities" while limiting them to perfunctory roles with limited power, authority and opportunities to lead, develop the substantive content, or political agenda that informed those programs.
- an interest in encouraging dispositions in participants that were supportive of consensus making and consent giving and away from the exercise of positive freedom (assuming responsibility) and expressions of differences, disagreement or dissent (Walther et al. 2020).

This model was also designed to discourage agonistic politics and any challenges to the intellectual edifice undergirding the prevailing political socioeconomic system and its distribution of power relations. It was designed by traditional power elites to preempt disruptions to the social arrangements, by buttressing the predictability and repetition upon which dominant patterns of life depend (Honig 1993). Critical thinking or forms of participation that were disruptive were taboo and described in ways that ensured that the inherently political or contentious character of this action could not be recognized or valorized. According to many media commentators, experts and politicians and others committed to "commonsense" understandings of politics and youth this kind of politics was bad or akin to delinquent behavior. It was therefore the very antithesis of the kind of behavior needing to be adopted on the way to becoming a "good citizen," and an example of the kind of problematic behavior the programs were designed to mitigate (Bessant 2020).

These programs, such as ministerial youth roundtables, school councils, and youth advisory groups were designed both to govern and to impart the approved forms of "civic knowledge" deemed necessary for "good citizenship" defined within the liberal, capitalist, economic tradition, a participatory model oriented toward rational consensus, reconciliation, and economic development (Mouffe 1993). It overlooked the diverse and contentious nature of political action young people were already taking part in—which went beyond bolstering conventional institutional political processes (Walther 2020).

It disregarded how many young people were already educating each other, how they communicated with each other and affirmed political values and worldviews. It involved passing over the capacity of and value in young people teaching and informing their elders in ways that apprised established leaders of their (young people's) political ideas and new kinds of politics they were developing and practicing (Bessant et al. 2015:). Moreover, it was a model that ignored how young people were mobilizing each other, creating solidarities, encouraging each other to participate, and importantly, how many were reimaging and renewing politics (Gordon and Taft 2011; Bessant 2021).

In spite of these new youth participation programs proliferating in governments, schools, and NGOs, it is not evident those initiatives actually helped ensure the quality and effectiveness of young people's political experience or enhanced their ability to shape decisions. Indeed, as some argued, these programs can result in young people becoming disaffected and discontented with conventional political processes. As Ah Kwon found in her research on youth participation in UN agencies, the young people she interviewed complained there were few opportunities to speak because too much space was being taken up with "ministers bragging about their amazing policies." Moreover, their involvement was "scripted," leaving little room for debate that might result in them actually shaping policy. Yet despite the official talk about participation and use of metaphors like "roundtable," no statutory commitments or legislative requirements that ensure practical effect is given to the voice of young participants (Ah Kwon 2018: 7). Matthew et al.'s empirical investigations into young people's participation in school councils reiterated this finding, revealing also it is not a new phenomenon:

> poor participatory mechanisms are very effective in training young people to become non-participants … In many cases these [youth participation forums] operate as little more than ideas groups … used to disseminate information and to communicate ideas, rather than being concerned with the business of making decisions. (Matthews, Limb, Harrison, and Taylor 1998/99:24)

For these reasons the capacity of many young people to participate and effect decisions was not significantly greater or more democratic than it was before the implementation of those programs.

It was a model that failed to deliver on the promise that participation in public life would help change the status quo, improve our lives and enhance democracy (Walter et al. 2020;

AhKwon 2018). The spread of these programs did not see those participating in "youth round tables" and similar forums enjoy greater positive freedom, or increased capacity to shape agendas or decision making. Nor were those agendas representative of a range of young people's experience (Vromen Collins 2010; Banjac 2017: 471–486). Rarely were participants permitted or encouraged to appear and speak freely as they wanted to—indeed, on occasions when they did so in a formal setting they were censured, constrained, or removed (Gordon and Taft 2011). It was also a model that did not acknowledge or accommodate power disparities, or encourage the right to dissent, critique, and create new possibilities (Fox 2013). While this "governance youth participation" model may have worked for some, many young people inside and outside those programs, felt let down by and distrustful of governments and the democratic process. As Australian research by Collin and McCormack (2020b) found:

> Young people aged 18-30 years are dissatisfied with how Australian democracy is functioning. In keeping with the general population . . . they have low trust in formal political institutions and elites and are less likely than in previous decades to be members of parties and trade unions.

Youth Participation as Contention

Many young people came to recognize how plurality and contentious politics better met their interests compared to the prevailing governance model. It also provided opportunities to debunk the youth deficit model and to represent themselves as politically capable (Joo 2018: 401-422). I suggest we can in part understand the recent appearance of large numbers of young people, and young women in particular, in politics, as a rejection of that official governance model of youth participation. That model was not delivering on the promise that participants could engage in the decision-making process about issues of concern to them. It was a model specifically designed to not generate new forms of politics or encourage the possibility of democratic struggles, including the questioning of the status quo—quite the opposite (Ah Kwon 2018).

This rejection of the governance model took place in a context characterized by "the participatory condition," a condition characterized by unprecedented numbers of people using new technologies to access, produce, create, and communicate (Barney et al. 2016). Or, for Castells (2004) and others, we saw the emergence of global networked societies and the enhancement of young people's ability to rework their identities as "global citizens" (Bessant 2014, Dahlgren 2013, Vromen 2017).

Yet even as participation became more "flexible, non-hierarchical" and supportive of extra institutional participation, many recognized it could only work if "agonism could 'thrive" (Barney et al. 2016). As the experiences and actions of participants reveal, they struggled to be taken seriously and effect change, and opted for a form of democratic agonistic politics. In short, the rise of a "digital culture" encouraged greater participation and new political practices. It was also a "culture" skewed toward young people dissatisfied with social institutions that they believed were deaf to their voices, overly hierarchical, bureaucratic, rigid, and too slow to act (Barney et al. 2016).

New technologies allowed many young people to participate in politics more effectively than they had previously. They could do this from a variety of sites, many of which were well outside the domain of formal parliamentary politics (Vromen 2017). Digital technologies helped facilitate exchanges between those within the inner sanctum of government and the "private spaces" of home or school. It enabled the crossing of borders for those living in sites that were geographically and politically remote from decision-making forums and where the voices of young people and young women in particular were rarely heard. It helped overcome obstacles to participation experienced by those marginalized or disengaged from social institutions.

In these ways, digital technologies helped to overcome some of the impediments to participation that tended to be greater for young women. They included, for example, the overcoming of hurdles like the practice of discouraging young women from using public spaces like the streets or dealing with the masculine and ageist ethos of politics characterized by gendered and age-based discrimination, to name but a few. The "participatory condition" allowed many young people and young women direct access and immediate connection, the ability to create content, communicate, and mobilize.

Conclusion

The recent entry of significant numbers of girls and young women into the political field where they now play high-profile and effective roles is changing politics. It is creating new possibilities and altering how political participation is conceptualized and practiced. It is changing what it means to be a political actor and how young female political actors are represented. Courtesy of new technologies, these newcomers are generating new forms of symbolic, cultural, and political capitals as they change relations between themselves and formal decision makers. The nature of this interchange reveals major changes in relations between girls and young people and the power elite.

How these newcomers entered politics is diverse: some took formal paths, while most preferred extra-parliamentary participation, rejecting conventional parliamentary consensus politics, while some chose a hybrid option. The forms their participation took is similarly diverse.

While the gendered dimensions provide some insight into what is taking place, it does not provide a full account. What moved them to participate at this point in time has much to do with the nature of the issues. The basic right to a future life on a planet that is inhabitable was identified as a powerful force that provoked many to act. Similarly, the ethical nature of "demands" to act that flow from "situated injustices" (like gendered injustice, gun violence, and war) help us to better understand what is happening. Perhaps too the highly charged zeitgeist in respect to "women's issues" evident in the rise of the #MeToo movement and a growing awareness of gender inequity and sexual violence encourage young women to enter the political field.

Disillusionment with traditional leaders, a sense their voices fell on deaf ears and their interests ignored, compounded concerns about the lack of integrity many saw as characterizing conventional politics. That distrust of social institutions led many to turn away from consensus politics and governance models of youth participation. Thus, we have seen a steady movement toward democratic contentious or agonistic politics occurring in extra-parliamentary sites (Karampampas, Temple, and Grasso 2020: 420–436).

The "participatory condition" expanded relational possibilities has explanatory value for why so many young women and girls were able to build new collectives of organized actors, to bind themselves through promises and new social imaginaries and generally participate politically in all the ways they have.

Other explanations considered were recruitment practices, role modeling and the "homophily" principle of social networks (Renstrom et al. 2020; Knops 2021; Wahlstrom et al. 2019). To this we can add "the desire to belong" and, importantly, the politics of solidarity: practices that create confidence in each other, that rest on reciprocity that works to create a legitimate power and new-founded authority. Each of these accounts provide valuable insights into what is taking place.

Something unexpected and unpredictable has begun. As Arendt (1958) argued, this is because such "startling unexpectedness" is "inherent in all beginnings" in politics. The fact that these improbable newcomers are capable of the kinds of actions they have displayed, means they have initiated, instigated, and put things into motion which no-one could have predicted. We are witnessing the birth pangs signifying the end of an old order and the emergence of a new political imaginary.

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CHAPTER 52

POLITICAL INEQUALITY AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

RUSSELL J. DALTON

The democratic ideal is based on citizens expressing their preferences through the political process and having a meaningful influence on the government.[1] Elections have traditionally been the main conduit for citizen input. However, a negative indicator of the health of democracy is the broad decline in voter turnout in most affluent democracies. Each decade, fewer and fewer voters are showing up at the polls on election day.

Thus, it is a positive development when more people have access to new means of democratic participation (Smith 2009; Cain et al. 2003). Citizens are using increasingly diverse methods beyond voting to influence their government. These new forms of participation greatly expand the potential for citizens to influence public policy and further democratic progress. However, the irony is that because these activities require greater resources, skills, and cognitive demands from participants, they may further widen the participation gap between higher-status individuals and those with fewer resources. Compounding this trend, the decline in turnout is typically greater among lower-status citizens, which exaggerates the participation gap.

This chapter shows that the changing pattern of citizen participation is widening the participation gap between the politically rich and the politically poor in contemporary democracies. Even if there is a de jure equality in political opportunity, a de facto inequality in actual participation may widen differences in the voice of different social and ideological groups. If this is the case, an increasing participation gap may erode the foundations of democracy that are based on the equality of the citizens' ability to influence political outcomes. The reality of democratic voice is falling short of the ideal.

After briefly defining the theoretical and political importance of equality to democratic participation, this chapter focuses on the inequality of political voice as a function of social status characteristics. These are not the only factors to consider in explaining citizen participation: they were chosen because prior research highlights the importance of social status to political activity. The chapter then describes the levels of participation inequality across a set of contemporary democracies. The first area is voting in elections, both across nations and across time. The chapter then compares inequality for other forms of political action. Finally, we discuss the implications for contemporary democracies and their citizens.

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[1] Portions of this chapter draw upon Dalton (2017).

THE EQUALITY PRINCIPLE

Robert Dahl (1996: 639) stated the classic argument for why equality is essential for meaningful democracy:

> [I]n making collective decisions, the ... interests of each person should be given equal consideration. Insuring that the interests of each are given equal consideration, in turn, requires that every adult member of an association be entitled to participate in making binding and collective decisions affecting that person's good or interest. This principle, in turn, requires political equality, which can only be achieved in a democratic system.

This principle is widely endorsed by nearly all modern democratic theorists.[2]

Involving all the public in politics also strengthens the democratic process. Jeffersonian logic argues that political participation produces better citizens. People who participate typically become more informed about political issues. This is why analysts often describe elections as a national civics lesson in which the public hears and discusses current policies affecting their lives. Other research suggests that people increase their understanding of the complexity of the democratic process, with both positive and negative consequences (Parry and Moyser 1992, ch. 12).

Electoral politics has historically moved toward decreasing inequality. First came the gradual expansion of the voting franchise to a wider share of the male population. In addition, systems of double voting for some groups (like university graduates in Britain or weighted voting in nineteenth-century Germany) were abolished. Women gained the franchise in the early 1900s in most democracies. The legal age for voting has also decreased over time. Today, electoral systems are structured on the principle of equal access to the vote. Proportional representation systems are most effective in ensuring equality if the electoral districts are relatively large. The bias is potentially greater in majoritarian electoral systems that elect a single official from a district, especially if districts vary in their population. The principle of "one person, one vote" is now the accepted standard.

Another rationale for political equality is that the public and the polity benefit if the whole population is involved in political decisions. People articulate the needs that governments should address. If this input is lacking or distorted, then the decisions of the government may be suboptimal (Bartels 2008; Hacker and Pierson 2011). If societal needs go unaddressed, problems may fester and generate larger distortions in government administration and policymaking. For example, if policymakers do not hear of the true costs of deindustrialization, the costs will mount. If they do not hear of the true costs of inequality in social and economic opportunity, society will suffer. Policymaking that considers the full social and political consequences would be more democratic, and presumably more successful in the long run.

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[2] There is, however, a countercurrent that argues citizens are not sufficiently engaged to make reasonable choices and thus political voice should be limited or mediated (Brennan 2016; Achen and Bartels 2006).

A democracy that is ineffective in ensuring equal voice may also generate discontent in the populace, which can erode the social contract that democracy is based upon. Research suggests that participation and democratic rights are strongly related. Freedom of the press is higher in nations with more political protest, and protest is higher in nations with greater press freedom (Welzel 2014). Even more striking, other research demonstrates that the quality of democratic governance is positively related to the level of citizen participation and the equality of participation by social status (Dalton 2017; 2022). One of democracy's strengths is in ensuring the basic human right to have a voice in the decisions affecting one's life.

These considerations lead us to examine the levels of political inequality in various forms of political participation across a set of contemporary democracies.

Social Status and Participation

It is implausible that full equality in political voice will ever be achieved. Yet, this is an inquiry into the inevitable inequality of participation. Some forms of inequality may be more or less randomly spread throughout the population, without great bias in how social strata, religious groups, regional populations, or other subgroups are represented. For instance, personal interests vary. Some people are disinterested in sports or popular culture; other people distance themselves from politics because of their personal preferences. If non-participation is a relatively random personal choice, then the consequences might still be consistent with the principle of equal opportunity.

The opportunity to participate does not ensure that everyone can exercise this opportunity, however. And the principle of "one person-one vote" does not ensure that everyone votes. Even when voting is compulsory, some people still decide not to vote. Moreover, the formal principle of equal participation does not apply to other forms of political action: contacting one's representative, attending a political meeting, participating in protest activities, or posting political comments on social media. Thus, as political participation expands into new forms of activity, the potential for inequality of voice and influence increases. This is especially the case when various forms of action make greater financial, time, or social capital demands than showing up on election day to cast a ballot. The expansion of participation may, therefore, increase the inequality of political influence.

Of central concern is when inequality stems from factors that limit a person's potential to participate and are often beyond the individual's control. The most direct example of this follows from the civic voluntarism model of Verba and his colleagues (Evans and Hepplewhite, Chapter 34, this volume; Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Their studies and other research almost universally find that higher social status (e.g., education, higher status occupations, and income) represents essential *skills and resources* that enable people to participate in politics. For example, having the leisure time to read the news, and the skills to follow media discourse helps foster political engagement.

Social status also reflects a set of *cognitive abilities* that facilitate activity. Education and high-status occupations often encourage (or select on) the ability to process complex information such as sorting through the policy choices at election time. Effective lobbying activity also requires substantial skills and sophistication.

Norman Nie, Jane Junn, and Kenneth Stehlik-Barry (1996) showed that social status further encourages a set of *citizenship norms* that encourage participation, what they call "enlightened citizenship." Higher SES individuals are more likely to feel efficacious about their potential political influence. Other research indicates that educational experiences can influence a person's understanding of the political world and affect the formation of citizenship norms (Welzel 2014; Dalton 2021). Higher-status individuals are more likely to have a broader view of their role as democratic citizens, which can expand the boundaries of political action. Nie and his colleagues (1996: 5–6) stated that higher social status can "encourage understanding of and adherence to [the] norms and principles of democracy."

The "standard model" of political participation thus maintains that social status is a strong predictor of who exercises political voice. Higher-status individuals, especially the better educated, are more likely to have the time, the money, the access to political information, and the ability to become politically involved. The implication of the standard model, however, is to predict that a systematic subset of the population will have a lesser political voice—which erodes the basis of democratic voice and representation. This is the central topic of this chapter.

Governments are less likely to consider the silent groups that may need government protection or assistance the most, while the politically engaged garner even more government benefits. Such inequalities might be constrained or countered in elections where there is a formal limit on activity. Labor unions may mobilize working-class voters in support of leftist parties, or civil-society groups may mobilize marginalized population groups. However, the mobilization of participation is different for other types of political activity. The cognitive and financial demands of participation in non-electoral activity may thus accentuate social status bias compared to voting turnout.

Of course, other forms of political equality exist in contemporary democracies. Gender is another potentially important factor in producing the inequality of political voice (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001; Kittilson and Bernal, Chapter 33 in this volume). Traditional social norms and lower levels of social–economic status historically restricted women's political participation in many nations. However, this is changing. Since the 1980s, the proportion of women in the United States that have cast their ballot in presidential elections is higher than the proportion of men out of the eligible adult population (Leighley and Nagler 2014). The gender gap in Europe has also narrowed over time (Norris and Inglehart 2003; Gallego 2008; Smets and van Ham 2013;). Gender is an important factor, but social status divisions are much wider.[3]

A participation gap can also exist across racial/ethnic groups in many contemporary democracies (Just and Anderson 2012, 2014; Abrajan, Leighley, and Markarian, Chapter 35, in this volume). For example, if Hispanics participate less in American politics, or Afro-Caribbeans are less active in Britain, this may reflect their modest resource/skill endowments. Immigrant workers typically have lower political skills and resources—and political influence—in their new home. A generation or two ago, most societies were less diverse than they are today. Population migrations and changing rules about citizenship are increasing diversity in most contemporary democracies. However, most established democracies still have small minority populations, especially with established citizenship, to vote in elections. The composition of ethnic/racial minorities also varies widely across nations, making cross-national comparisons more difficult. Even though this is beyond the scope of this chapter, racial/ethnic divisions are also likely linked at least in part to differences in social status.

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[3] For example, the correlation of gender and turnout in the 2014 ISSP is r=.01; the correlation of female gender with other forms of participation is also modest: contact r= -.10, contribute money r=.01, protest r= -.02, and internet forum r= -.09 (compare to Figure 52.2). Age is another potential source of inequality, but it is a changeable trait over the life cycle (Dalton 2021).

Inequalities in Participation

Electoral research has closely studied the social status inequalities in voting turnout (Blais 2000; Wattenberg 2009; Leighley and Nagler 2014; Gallego 2014). Voting is the most common of political activities and makes relatively modest time and resource demands on the citizen. At the same time, voting determines the composition of legislatures and representation in the government. It is the cornerstone of the democratic process. If some groups systematically do not vote, this creates a representation deficit and may erode the foundations of democratic politics. Thus, turnout provides a key reference point for other aspects of political participation.

Inequalities in involvement also inevitably extend to other forms of political participation. When cities hold public hearings, there is a bias in which people are prepared to argue their case before local officials. When a campaign approaches, the more affluent are more likely to make contributions to their preferred candidates because they have the resources to make donations. The more affluent and educated citizen is also more likely to write their representative and participate in online political forums. And surprisingly to some observers, these same individuals are also more likely to protest and use other contentious forms of political action. The resource-rich are more likely to make their voices heard through many methods; the political poor may go unheard.

Moreover, inequalities for these other types of participation are likely greater than for voting in elections (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Voting is exceptional because of its one person-one vote rule. No one limits the number of letters a citizen can write to their representative, the number of meetings they can attend, or how often they can post political themes on social media. In addition, many of these non-electoral forms of action require greater skills and resources than showing up to vote on election day. Working on a campaign, organizing a petition, or writing letters makes more time and resource demands on the individual, which increases stratification.

The impact of various skills and resources also can vary across different forms of political action (Marien, Hooghe, and Quintelier 2010; Dalton 2017). Disposable income might be more important for political contributions, than for protesting. Educational skills might be more important for contacting and organizing activities than for attending a rally. Or, a trend away from time-based activities (such as working in a campaign) toward money-based activities (such as campaign contributions) may affect who participates in electoral politics.

In summary, if the patterns of political participation are changing over time, this may affect the size of the participation gap.

Evidence from the 2014 International Social Survey Program (ISSP) can illustrate the patterns of social inequality in political activities.[4] The ISSP survey asks about five types of participation: voter turnout, contributing money to a political or social cause, contacting a public official or the press, contentious/protest activities, or participating in an internet forum on politics.

Several social status traits can influence participation rates. Previous research points to the potency of educational effects in shaping political activity. The better educated feel more efficacious, have skills and resources that facilitate participation, the income to contribute to campaigns, and are socially connected in ways that encourage political activity (Smets and Ham 2013; Bovens and Wille 2010; Verba 2003. Income is especially relevant when financial resources or the leisure time they provide enhance a citizen's abilities to participate. Those in professional occupations also have the benefits of resources and skills to participate. A subjective measure of social status can summarize a person's class status.

Figure 52.1 displays the relationship between these social status traits and participation patterns for all of the 28 ISSP democracies combined (national patterns are described in the section entitled "Cross-National Patterns of Inequality"). The simple correlations (*r*) in the first panel show that people with more education, higher incomes, professional/managerial occupations, or with higher subjective social class tend to vote more often than their counterparts. Each of these social status measures reflects the skills, resources, and abilities that enhance citizens' abilities to follow the complexity of elections and make their voices heard. And even though their influence overlaps, the combination of social status traits is an even greater predictor of turning out to vote.[5]

Perhaps even more striking, the correlations between social status measures and voter turnout are generally smaller than for other activities. Despite the extensive attention given to the inequalities in voting, *this is one of the most equal forms of political activity*. Because they make more demands on participants and are unconstrained, contributing money and political contacting show higher levels of inequality for each of the four social status measures (Teorell, Sun, and Tobiasen 2007; Vráblíková 2017; Dalton 2017; cf. Stolle and Hooghe 2011). Thus, as more educated, higher income, and middle-class citizens increasingly turn to these activities, the overall inequality of political voice has grown.

The patterns for protest activity demonstrate this widening participation gap.[6] The popular lore is that protest is the domain of marginalized groups who do not have access to

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[4] Our thanks to the ISSP principal investigators who shared these data. The data and documentation are available from the GESIS data archive in Germany. The table presents the 28 nations that were asked about voting in the last election and that are scored as "free" by the Freedom House. Reports of turnout in surveys typically overstate voting because of its social desirability. This limits the correlations with turnout. To lessen this effect, we weighted the data so that reported turnout matches the official turnout percentages.

[5] The Multiple Correlation Coefficient, R, summarizes the total influence of these five social status measures. Because there is substantial overlap between measures, the Multiple R is not simply the addition of individual effects but measures their cumulative influence on participation. The Multiple R is .17 for voter turnout; .29 for contributing; .26 for contacting; .36 for protest; and .19 for participation in an internet forum.

[6] The protest index includes signing a petition, political consumerism (buying a product for political, environmental, or ethnical reasons), and protest activity.

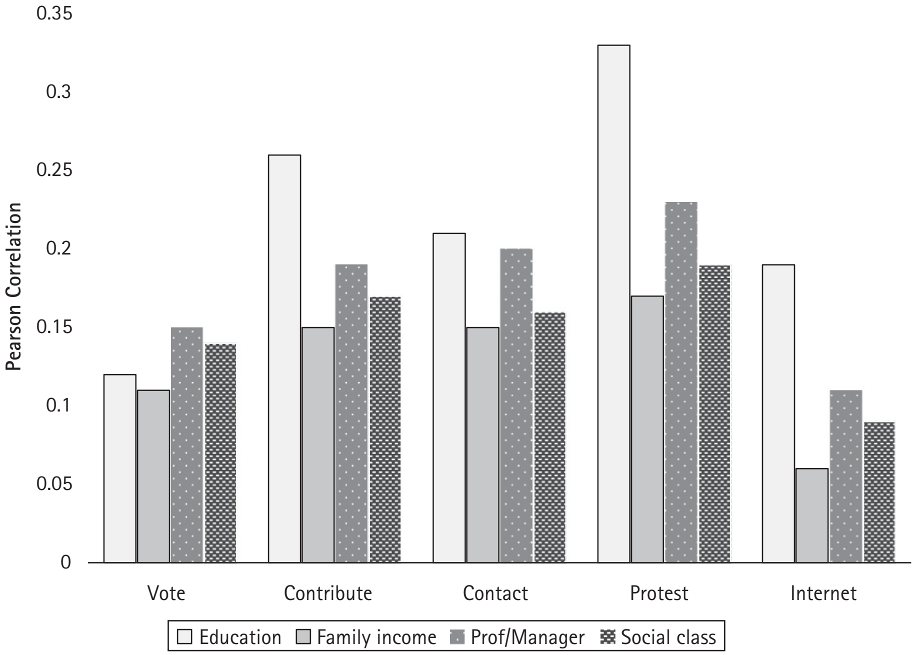

FIGURE 52.1 Social Inequalities in Participation

Source: 2014 International Social Survey, 28 democracies combined.

Note: The figure entries are Pearson r correlations that summarize the differences in participation for each trait.

politics by conventional means. To an extent that is true. In broader terms, however, protest activities have become a conventional method of participation by a wider share of contemporary publics. Students and young people protest, as always, but they are joined by environmentalists, senior citizens, parents of school-aged children, doctors, truck drivers, farmers, and a wide range of other groups. Protest has become the extension of conventional participation by other means. Moreover, to engage in protest, organize a petition, or buy products for political or ethical reasons requires skills and resources beyond checking a ballot (Quaranta 2016). Consequently, the correlation between education and protest is nearly three times larger than the correlation with voter turnout.

There has been much speculation and contrasting evidence on how online participation will affect the inequality of participation. As the internet developed, researchers debated whether online activism would accentuate or lessen the social status participation gap (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012: ch. 16; Anduiza, Jensen, and Jorba 2012). On the one hand, decentralizing and dispersing the channels for political expression might engage more people in political discourse, especially those who did not participate in traditional channels. On the other hand, access to the internet varies by social status, and even today the skills and resources represented by SES are valuable in navigating the web, following political discussions, and contributing online. Thus, early studies of various online political activities concluded that the same SES biases could be observed as for other political activities (Cantijoch, Cutts, and Gibson 2016).

The ISSP asked a simple question about participation in any online political forum. Online participation is more complex and diversified. Yet, this item shows a significant social status gap, albeit smaller than for other non-electoral forms of participation. One might expect that maintaining a political blog, joining online campaigns, and other such activities would display wider stronger social stratification than voting (Scholzman, Verba, and Brady 2012).

Inequalities over Time

A single survey provides a snapshot of participation patterns in contemporary democracies, but a further question is whether inequality is growing over time. Politics is becoming more complex, and seemingly follows the Alice in Wonderland example of citizens having to run just to stay in place. The relatively tranquil politics of the 1950s and early 1960s now contrasts with political debates on a wider set of policy issues, confronting a more and more complex international economic system, and new international conflicts.

Inevitably, people with higher levels of social skills and resources are more likely to vote, and their turnout has persisted over time. In the United States, for example, the Census Bureau's Current Population Surveys show the overall decline in turnout over the past several decades (Figure 52.2).[7] However, the rate of decline is markedly higher among less-educated citizens. For instance, people with less than a primary-school education had a more than 2.5 percent decline in turnout per four-year electoral cycle. By comparison, turnout dropped by only 1.0 percent per election cycle among people with a bachelor's degree or more. Consequently, the education gap increases between these two extreme groups: a 28.5 percent gap in turnout in 1964 increases to 43.0 percent by 2012. Analyses of the American National Election Studies show similar trends over time.

The same pattern has been found in several other West European democracies (Birch, Gottfried, and Lodge 2014; Armington and Schädel 2015; Dassonneville and Hooghe 2017).[8] Another study of voter turnout in seven established democracies found that the education gap widened in most nations between 1975 and 2014 (Dalton 2017). Thus, the politically rich have become even more disproportionally influential in determining election outcomes in most established democracies and thus likely in the policies enacted by democratic governments.

Meanwhile the less educated, the poor, and members of the working class are turning away from elections and losing their voice. There is disturbing evidence that increases in income inequality are at least partially fueling this widening participation gap (Schäfer and Schwander 2019; Birch, Gottfried, and Lodge 2014; Solt 2010). Moreover, such a policy cycle might further erode the participation of lower-status individuals who conclude the political system is unconcerned with their needs (Solt 2008). This would suggest a self-reinforcing

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[7] Because of the large size of these samples and the higher response rates, scholars often consider these surveys as more definitive than the ANES trends. Yet all survey data suffers from the overreport of turnout by survey respondents. See Karp and Brockington (2005) and Dassoneville and Hooghe (2017).

[8] A methodological complication of survey-based studies is the increasing tendency of these samples to overreport turnout, which biases the results unless statistical adjustments are made.

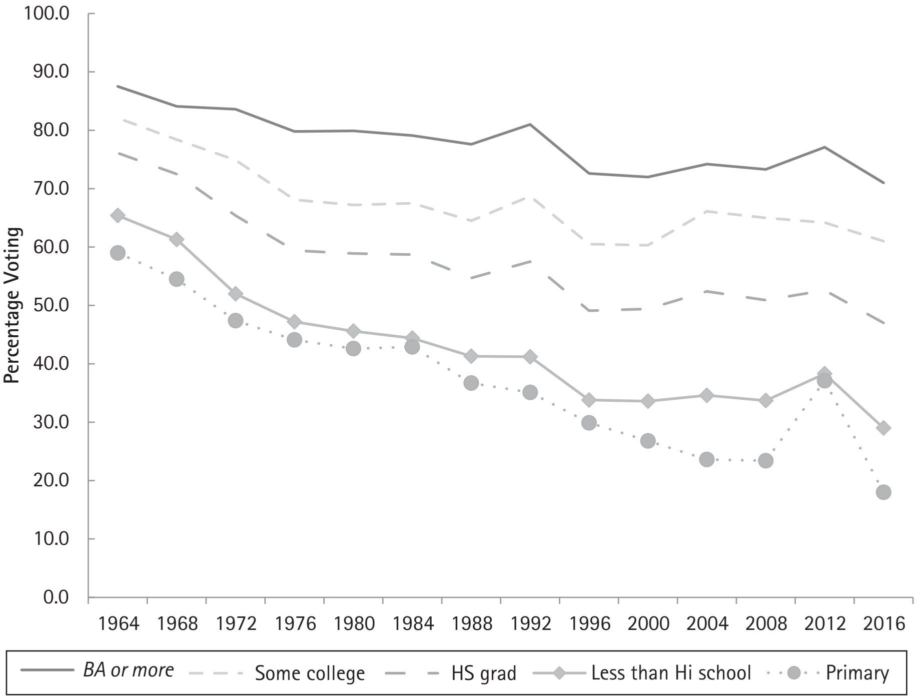

FIGURE 52.2 Educational Trends in US Turnout

Source: Current Population Surveys, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Note: The figure presents the percentage voting among citizens, even if not registered.

process of lower turnout generating less attention to the non-voters, which further lowers turnout.

The same question can be asked about non-electoral activities that have increased in frequency over time. It is difficult to track the inequality of non-electoral participation because there are few long-term series asking about these activities and the nature of non-electoral participation changes over time. Researchers often have to mix different items or have a relatively short time span. Some studies find little evidence of increasing inequality (Stolle and Hooghe 2011). More recent cross-national research comparing participation in the 1970s to the 2014 ISSP found increasing inequality for attending a meeting, contacting, signing a petition, or attending a demonstration; more detailed and comparable time series from the United States displayed the same pattern (Dalton 2017: ch. 9). Supporting this position, Mark Bovens and Anchrit Wille (2010, 2017) have provocatively argued that the Netherlands, and other democracies, are moving toward a "diploma democracy" in which the better educated are expanding their political involvement at the same time as the less educated are virtually absent from electoral politics.

In summary, two different participation trends are increasing the social inequality of citizens' political activity. On the one hand, decreasing levels of voter turnout are leaving behind the less-educated, lower-income, and working-class public, who now vote less often. On the other hand, citizen involvement in other non-electoral forms of participation has been expanded, and this is increasingly the domain of the better-education, affluent, and middle-class public. The sum total of both trends is that political voice is becoming more and more unequal in most contemporary democracies.

Cross-National Patterns of Inequality

Behind the broad patterns for all the ISSP nations combined, inequality in participation can also vary across nations. Inequality is especially likely for voter turnout because of the influence of electoral systems and rules (Teorell et al. 2007; Gallego 2014). Table 52.1 presents the correlation between education and turnout for each of the 28 ISSP nations that asked the turnout question. Two results stand out in these comparisons. First, there is a significant inequality of turnout between education groups in most nations. The average correlation (r= .12) is a substantively meaningful voting gap, and all but 4 nations show a positive relationship. Inequality is virtually endemic to democratic electoral politics.

Second, this evidence shows that educational inequality in voter turnout varies substantially across nations. The United States displays the highest level of inequality (r=.33), which is equivalent to a 52 percent turnout rate gap between those with primary versus post-secondary education! It is as if each less-educated voter was competing with two more-educated voters in deciding the election. The contrast to the US example is the nations with mandatory voting that restricts inequality (such as Australia and Belgium) and several Scandinavian and other nations.

Several factors explain the excessive inequality levels in the United States: a restrictive voter registration system, majoritarian elections, complex ballots, workday voting, and problems in electoral administration. Similar institutional factors in other nations would also raise the hurdles to vote and thus make voter skills and resources more closely tied to who votes and who does not. In addition, high levels of social and income inequality in resources, as in the United States, also affect the social status inequality of voter turnout (Anderson and Beramendi 2012; Pontusson and Rueda 2010). Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Norway are good examples of nations that have relatively low inequality of turnout, linked to the mobilization of the working class by unions and social democratic parties and low social inequality in the skills and resources of their citizens. Other research demonstrates that the declining share of unionized workers is linked to the overall decline in turnout in Western democracies (Gray and Caul 2000), which is concentrated among working-class and less-educated voters (see Figure 52.2).

National conditions may also come into play for inequality in other forms of participation. The right column of Table 52.1 presents the correlation between education and an index combining the four non-electoral activities for each nation.[9] The contrast between columns is striking. While education inequalities in voter turnout are troublesome, inequality in non-electoral activities shows a participation gap that is nearly three times larger. This gap exists both in countries with compulsory voting (Australia and Belgium) and in Scandinavian nations that have successfully moderated inequality in voting. Equally striking, the United

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[9] The four non-voting measures (contributing, contacting, protest, and internet forum) are coded 0-1. The four measures were added together and divided by 4 to produce a 0-1 summary index.

Table 52.1 Education and the Participation Gap in Voting and Non-Electoral Activities

Nation	Voting	Non-electoral
Australia	–.04	.31
Austria	.07	.28
Belgium	.04	.34
Chile	.06	.36
Croatia	.02	.27
Czech Republic	.19	.33
Denmark	.11	.21
Finland	.09	.29
France	.06	.32
Germany	.21	.34
Hungary	.15	.23
Iceland	.08	.31
India	.12	.20
Israel	.15	.33
Japan	–.01	.15
Lithuania	.10	.31
Netherlands	.17	.31
Norway	.09	.25
Poland	.16	.34
Slovak Republic	.11	.26
Slovenia	.12	.33
South Africa	–.02	.06
South Korea	.01	.27
Spain	.09	.39
Sweden	.01	.34
Switzerland	.21	.39
Taiwan	–.12	.36
United States	.33	.44
All nations	.12	.30

Source: 2014 International Social Survey, 28 democratic nations.
Note: The table entries are the Pearson r correlations between education and turnout or an index of four non-electoral activities.

States displays the highest level of educational inequality in participation in both voting and non-electoral activities. In contrast, Japan and South Africa stand out for their low inequality for both voting and non-electoral participation. Unconstrained by the rules that limit and equalize participation in voting, the resources and skills of the more educated (and higher income, middle-class occupations) citizens give them a disproportionate voice in the democratic process beyond elections.

The table also shows some variability across nations. Less research has examined the impact of various contextual factors on social status differences in non-electoral participation (Vráblíková 2017). Christensen (2011), for example, found that open institutional structures (strong parliamentary structures and decentralized governing) have less inequality across educational groups for membership in public interest groups, political consumerism, and protest. Weldon and Dalton (2014) found that consociational political systems had higher levels of social status inequality, but other factors such as federalism and income inequality did not affect inequality in participation. There is a substantial overlap in the ranking of nations on both voting inequality and non-electoral inequality, which suggests that some general societal factors—whether institutional or cultural—are at play.[10] Overall, however, institutional factors appear to have less impact on non-electoral participation because the usage of these activities is by definition less institutionally structured.[11]

ADDRESSING THE INEQUALITY PROBLEM

Arend Lijphart used his 1996 presidential address to the American Political Science Association to make both the political and normative arguments for political equality. He stated: "[U]nequal participation spells unequal influence—a major dilemma for representative democracy." (Lijphart 1997: 1; Skocpol 2003). I agree with Lijphart, but the situation has become more challenging over the subsequent two decades.

Two trends have increased the inequality of citizens' voice (and influence) within contemporary democracies. In most nations, the decline in voter turnout has come disproportionately among the less educated and the less affluent. The reasons are complex, including their feeling that the political system is not attentive to their needs and their lower ability to be politically active. This reciprocal relationship depresses turnout further over time. The result is that elections—and the governments selected by elections—are increasingly biased toward upper-status voters.

The second trend involves the expansion of participation beyond voting. More people are more politically active in varied ways than was the case a generation or two ago—even allowing for the decrease in voting turnout. This marks a positive expansion of democracy because more voice means a larger role for the public in the political process. However, these non-electoral forms of action are even more disproportionally used by upper-status citizens who possess the skills, resources, and networks to be engaged in these more demanding forms of action.

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[10] The Pearson correlation between vote and non-electoral inequality is r=.39 for these 28 democracies. The standard deviations also show slightly lower variability in inequality for non-electoral participation.

[11] For example, the United States again displays a wider educational divide for protest than most other societies (r=.41), but 17 other nations with varied institutional structures have relationships greater than r=.30.

These two trends exacerbate the inequalities in who participates, and which voices policymakers now hear. If financiers on New York's Wall Street or London's Square Mile lobby for their interests, this is normal politics. If blue-collar workers in Ohio or the Ruhrgebeit are not involved, their policy views and needs go unheard. The same problem would exist if we reversed the roles of the two groups—although this is very unlikely. Environmental problems can lead to global climate change if unaddressed. Deindustrialization and growing income inequality can generate social and economic problems that are more easily solved by addressing the root problems. And to argue, as some scholars have, that the interests of those without university degrees can be well represented by graduate-degree holders contradicts the literature on descriptive representation for gender and race/ethnicity which show that the representation of demographic groups affects policy outcomes (Bovens and Wille 2017; cf. Hayes and Hibbing 2017; Kittilson 2008). In the long term, it is not beneficial for society and the democratic process if only some voices are heard, and these shape the policies of democratic governments.

Well-educated citizens taking advantage of new participation opportunities is a positive development for democracy. Many of their concerns address issues shared by the public at large, empowering the citizenry. They are being good citizens in expressing their interests. So, the political process should not consider limiting their participation. However, if there is a wide gap in who participates, and the loud voice of some drowns out the weaker voices of others, this is not beneficial for those who are not heard or for the polity overall.

Addressing this participation gap poses a continuing challenge for democracies. A root cause of political inequality is the persistence of social inequality in contemporary societies, and to some extent, this will continue. Even the most equal democratic societies show an inequality in political voice. At the same time, however, social inequality has grown over time, so that we are moving in the direction that widens the participation gap (Stiglitz 2013; Piketty 2014). Any efforts to address the large structural issues are likely to be long-term methods of reform. There are ways for democracies to encourage the equality principles they claim to support—but inequality of voice is a very difficult problem to solve.[12]

Political parties may be vehicles to articulate the needs of the working class and less educated, and mobilize these citizens to become politically active. This was traditionally the electoral base of leftist parties, but as many of these parties moved to the center to attract middle-class voters this lessened the voice of lower-status citizens (Grasso 2016). Electoral politics is taking on the form that Bovens and Wille (2017) term a "diploma democracy", with voters and elites now drawn disproportionately from the better educated, even for parties that once spoke for and included members of the working class.

One consequence is that many democracies are seeing a rise in new right or left-populist parties that focus on the interests of the working class and underprivileged. Rightist populist parties have a base in France, Belgium, Italy, and several Scandinavian parties, while leftist populist parties have grown in Spain, Greece, and several other European states. In other nations, there are challenges from the right and left (such as the Linke and AfD in Germany, or the Socialist Party and Freedom Party in the Netherlands). Some analysts might critique this development because it strains the boundaries of democratic discourse at times. However, it arose because of a deficiency in democratic representation by existing party systems that led voters to parties claiming to represent their interests (Evans and Tilley 2017; Dalton 2018).[13] If the established parties eschew these new populist parties, they should try to address these voters' unaddressed policy interests.

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[12] To this point, Dalton and Weldon (2017) find that national income inequality is unrelated to SES differences in participation rates; Quaranta (2015: ch. 4) finds that the development of social welfare policies in a nation has little impact on the inequality of educational groups in protest activity.

For both electoral and non-electoral politics, one possible method of broadening participation is through social groups and intermediary organizations. However, the irony of the civic voluntarism model is that the vitality of intermediary organizations often reflects the skills and resources of their members (which also facilitate political participation). The flowering of a social movement society in the past several decades seems to disproportionately produce citizen groups that build upon a middle-class base and their interests. These are positive developments that address important social issues, but what is lagging are civil society activities for the interests of lower-status citizens.

Community groups might become advocates for the lower-status individuals, even if the individuals remain relatively passive. There are many positive examples of this in social justice groups, anti-poverty organizations, and similar groups. Yet, when placed in the larger context of interest groups politics, one might be wary of the potential for effective political influence. For example, Frank Baumgartner and his colleagues (2009: 255) noted the surfeit of such groups in their study of interest group lobbying in the US: "Equally conspicuous is the relative paucity of issues related to the poor and the economic security of working-class Americans." The lack of effective interest group representation by lower-status citizens magnifies the inequality gap.

Another reform option is to lower the bar for political activity, especially for non-electoral forms of action that are more strongly dependent on social skills and resources. The government can take the lead in these efforts if they choose to represent all citizens (Goldsmith and Crawford 2014). Governments could make it easier to write local representatives or request public services: asking people to navigate web pages is no longer sufficient. The government should be more user-friendly in ways to enable those with limited political and internet skills and resources to be involved. However, politicians and bureaucrats do not always welcome more public input.[14] And the irony of easing access is that those with skills and resources will likely take advantage of these new opportunities.

Perhaps there is a lesson in the literature on descriptive representation. Lower social-status groups are another minority deserving of government attention. And the emphasis on intersectionality might include class background. Yet, most of the literature and policy efforts on descriptive representation focus on gender or race/ethnicity, and almost ignore social class (e.g., Phillips 2020). Indeed, typically the solution for the descriptive representation of minorities is to elect the relatively affluent, better-educated members of these groups.

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[13] The interests of those of lower-social status are a mix of liberal and conservative views. I used the 2004 ISSP to identify those parties where a majority of their voters came from the working class or those below the media education of the nation. These parties are about equally distributed between leftist parties and extreme right parties.

[14] The current California governor wrote of his frustrations in trying the develop such reforms as mayor of San Francisco (Newsom and Dickey 2014).

An intriguing reform is the development of citizen panels or citizen deliberations (Farrell and Stone 2020; Baioccu and Ganuza 2017; Nabatchi et al. 2012;). A growing number of cities and other governing bodies are empaneling small groups of citizens (mini-publics) to deliberate on issues ranging from setting budget priorities to local planning decisions. *If there is a conscious effort to recruit citizens that reflect the diversity of the community*, rather than accept volunteers with the inevitable SES bias in participants, this can produce more equal citizen input.

If policymakers discussed the views of the citizenry with a representative group of citizens, this would at least expose them to voices they might not otherwise hear. A local setting allows for face-to-face discussions over information and the proposals to the local government. Citizen panels are easily organized and recruited at the local level. And such a process might stimulate more activity among formally disaffected parts of society. Even here, however, there is the possibility that such deliberative bodies might turn out to be another forum for those with skills and resources. Jurg Steiner's (2012: 49) review of deliberative bodies concluded: "What is really troubling is that there is a systematic bias in the sense that middle-aged men with higher levels of education tend to speak up the most. The empirical world is far away from the Habermasian normative ideal of equal and unconstrained participation." Still, I am intrigued by the potential of deliberative bodies to include new voices and significantly expand the democratic process.

Clearly, none of these options can fully resolve the dilemma of the participation gap. Maybe all of these ideas provide only a partial solution, and more ideas for increasing the equality of voice are needed (Smith 2009). Otherwise, the status quo produces inequality of voice that benefits parts of society over the legitimate needs of others—and democracy falls short of its ideal in theory and practice.

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